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# The South Haven Beacon

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## Council addresses several issues at May 4 meeting

***By James Windell***

After a lengthy Committee of the Whole meeting on Monday, May 4, 2026, the members of the South Haven City Council faced a long agenda for its regular first-Monday-of-the-month meeting.

However, apparently the Committee of the Whole meetings are w working, or council members are too burned out after several hours of meetings because the agenda was dealt with in an expeditious and efficient manner.

When the item on the agenda called Old Business was reached in this meeting, the council had four consecutive "ordinance to amend" decisions to make. Among those items was consideration of an ordinance to amend the City's zoning map by rezoning 241 Oak Street, South Haven, from R1-B Single-family residential to RM-1 multiple family residential.

The property at 241 Oak Street is the Victoria Resort and the owner of the resort was seeking rezoning to continue operating it as a resort. As found in previous City Council meetings, the owner's plan is to maintain resort use and later seek a special land use approval to expand the existing structure or add an additional structure. The City staff emphasized this is a straight rezoning (not a conditional rezoning), meaning once approved, any use allowed in RM-1 would be permitted on the property.

The South Haven Planning Commission reviewed the required ordinance factors for map amendments in March and approved a resolution recommending the rezoning. When the council began discussing this rezoning request, councilwoman Mary Hosley raised a concern that because the request is not conditional, there is no guarantee the property will remain a resort. "Future owners could pursue other RM-1-permitted uses," she said. She also said that rezoning does not fully align with the Master Plan's tailoring toward a resort concept, and that language about "resort use will remain" was struck from the Planning Commission resolution.

Hosley made the argument that recent development and short-term rental density in the immediate micro-community around the resort is low, and that Planning Commission findings about "highest concentration" did not reflect that immediate area. Councilman David Flack stated that the Planning Commission viewed the factors differently (looking at the broader area), noted nearby condos and existing traffic and vibrancy, and he supported rezoning as enabling investment and preventing property erosion.

A motion was made to approve the rezoning. A roll call vote resulted in a majority of council members voting in favor of adopting the ordinance rezoning of 241 Oak Street from R1-B to RM-1.

All of the other three items related to ordinance amendments were approved without much debate or discussion.

Moving on to New Business, the City Council was asked to consider approval of a resolution to set a public hearing on the 2026-2027 Budget. That resolution, Resolution 2026-16, was approved and a public hearing on the proposed City Budget will take place on Monday, May 18, 2026, at the next City Council meeting.

Taking up consideration of Resolution 2026-17, the City Council had to decide whether to approve a ballot proposal for the renewal and increase of a controlled substance enforcement millage.

This issue had been discussed earlier in the evening at the Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting. At that meeting, Police Chief Adam DeBoer emphasized that keeping two detectives assigned to controlled substance enforcement is the most important use of the millage. DeBoer told city council members and staff that drugs don't necessarily originate in South Haven, so interdiction work in places like Kalamazoo, Benton Harbor, and Grand Rapids is seen as a strong preventative use of funds.

DeBoer also said that his department had purchased drug testing equipment and canine purchases drew down the fund. The City's Finance Director said the fund balance is now healthy and sustained, however, DeBoer said that canine restart costs, which include buying a pre-trained dog plus approximately six weeks of handler and dog training, could cost as much as $40,000.

At least one council member raised concerns about property tax increases and the overall tax burden on residents. Staff indicated that the City Council must make the decision at City Council meeting that followed COW in order to get it on the ballot. Several council members indicated support for putting the question on the ballot, with the view that voters can decide the issue of the millage.

At the City Council meeting, it was stated that the proposed resolution would renew the long-running millage (in place for more than 20 years) and reset the rate to 0.7 mills. The millage proceeds, if voted for by the public, would fund two officers who work with inter-departmental agencies to keep narcotics out of the community. The millage also would help fund a K-9 dog.

More than one council member suggested that placing it on the ballot lets voters decide whether to pay the additional amount. Council Member Mary Hosley noted that this was the first time council saw the specific ballot language, though they knew the request was coming. Hosley questioned the need for the additional amount of millage and stressed that small increases add up for City residents.

Council Jeff Arnold made the motion to approve Resolution 2026-17. The resolution was approved by all council members.

A final consideration for the council was whether to approve construction of a permanent access driveway to Blue Star Highway for the Public Works facility located at 1199 8th Avenue, South Haven.

City Manager Kate Hosier said that the driveway has been "a long time coming," with earlier attempts to secure an additional driveway when the Public Works building was built. Both she and Public Works Director Dana Burd said the current 8th Avenue access to the facility is complicated because the road is shared with other businesses, including the Do-It Corporation and that deliveries and loading for those businesses can make the road partially or fully impassable.

Burg shared that in staff discussions over the past couple of years, secondary access consistently comes up as a safety and operations need. He said that access via Blue Star Highway would provide safer circulation for the team because traffic is only coming from one direction on Blue Star Highway. He also said that clearing and much of the gravel work were largely completed during the elevated tank construction. The cost of completing the new driveway would be about $406,000.

The City Council unanimously approved the staff to move forward and execute the necessary documents to proceed with the driveway.

## Your pet can be the Pet Mayor of South Haven

***By James Windell***

We know your beloved pet runs your household, but does your dog or cat have the right stuff to run the City of South Haven? If you think they have what it takes, Al-Van Humane Society has a perfect opportunity for you and your pet. You can nominate your dog or cat or other pet to be the Pet Mayor of South Haven.

"The Mayor, Annie Brown, has helped us put together this fun fundraiser so people can nominate their pet, and the winner will be our official Honorary Pet Mayor of South Haven," says Jordan Freeburn, Marketing and Development Coordinator for Al-Van Humane Society.

Freeburn notes that South Haven area residents will be able to celebrate the pets they adore while also helping raise money for animals in need at Al-Van Humane Society. The Pet Mayor fundraiser kicked off on May 5, but the nomination period runs through May 11.

She says that pets of all kinds are welcome to participate, from cats and dogs to turtles, birds, hamsters, and any other critter you can think of.

The way it works, Freeburn says, is that anyone can register their pet on the Al-Van website. "There is a $20 donation to participate and once that is submitted I will send them a form which they can complete with information about their pet and a photo of that pet," says Freeburn. "People can create a campaign slogan for their pet and that will all be loaded on our website."

*MAYOR ANNIE BROWN AND BETSY 2026*

After a dog or cat or other pet is nominated and registered, the photo and information about the nominee will be on the Al-Van website and people can go to the website and vote on the pet they would like to see elected Honorary City Mayor.

The election will include two rounds of voting, with supporters casting votes through donations. Each $1 donated equals one vote. During the first round, held May 12 through May 18, candidates will compete within their respective parties: the Dog Party, Cat Party, and Critter Caucus. The top vote-getter from each party will advance to the general election. The final round of voting will take place May 19 through May 25. The candidate with the most votes will be named Honorary Pet Mayor of South Haven and will receive an official swearing-in ceremony at City Hall, a prize package, and, of course, bragging rights for the next year.

According to Freeburn, their hope is that if it goes well this year this will be an annual event. "We're excited that this is a fun, lighthearted way of getting the community engaged while people can celebrate the pet they love," says Freeburn. "All the proceeds will be going to help the animals here at Al-Van."

Al-Van Humane Society is a 501(c)3 non-profit, no-kill shelter located in South Haven. The Al-Van mission is to compassionately serve the companion animals in our community by providing the best shelter, adoptive homes, education and resources available. Their motto is that every pet deserves love, care, and above all, a home.

To learn more about Al-Van and the Pet Mayor contest, go to al-van.org.

## South Haven History Club going to national finals for 17th Year

***By James Windell***

When the South Haven History Club went to the State competition for National History Day recently, they garnered lots of compliments.

"There were a lot of compliments given to me that South Haven students really represent themselves well," Julie Sheppard, the South Haven History Club teacher, said in a recent interview. "People appreciated how professional and well-spoken the students always are and they said how the students always have it together. Others told us how they appreciate everything that we are doing and how we involve our community."

Maybe if that's all Sheppard and her students came home with from the state tournament held in April at Saginaw Valley State University, that would be enough.

But the South Haven History Club, made up of students from the 4th grade through the 12th grade, have a history of producing excellent National History Day champions and awards. And, as is customary, the History Club returned home with several awards.

"All of the students presented extremely well," Sheppard said. "This was a really big competition this year and it was bigger than ever before with nearly 600 students competing."

Sheppard, who has been the teacher running the History Club for the past 17 years, said her students won several awards and recognition various categories and next month, for the 17th consecutive year, several will be going to the National Historv Day contest at the University of Maryland.

Those students going to Nationals in the Junior Division include Ava Martinez and Delanie Dyer for their winning performance entitled "Revolutionary War Women." Also headed to Maryland are Kora Miller and Emma O´Neil for their performance of "A Quiet Revolution: The Life of Elizabeth Schuyler."

Among the seniors, Owen Burleson will be taking his exhibit "Buried in Fear: Reaction and Reform in 1950's America" to the Nationals, and Ruby Peterson's performance of "The Venona Project," will also be there. And, Hayden Washegesic's "The Battle of Greasy Grass" will be competing at the national level.

Sheppard had kudos for Youth Division State winners, who do not, however, get to go to the Nationals. Coming in second place for Group Documentary was "Michael Jackson and how He Revolutionized the World of Music" by Gianna Dailey, Ava Marbury, Isabella Scuiletti, and Jh'Vonn Carter. Also finishing in Second Place for Group Performance was "Gettysburg" with Adelheid Washington, Aurora Zody, Margo Miller, and Keniyha Cannon. Ashlynn Hosier's "Worker's United: Bloody Harlan" finished in third place for Individual Exhibits.

According to Sheppard, some of the student projects won special state awards. "We had the best entry for Use of Family History that went to Ashlynn Hosier for her individual exhibit on the miner's strike called Workers United," she said. She also noted that Madisyn Lapinski won The Adler Award for Best Entry in Women's History for her documentary on Kathrine Switzer.

Prior to the National competition, the History Club will be doing local presentations. On Thursday May 5, they will be presenting at the Scott Club, and on May 8 from 5:30 to 7:00 pm all of the students will be showing their work at the Liberty Hyde Bailey Museum. They will also reprise their work on May 13 at 6:00 pm at the South Haven Memorial Library. Then there is the Red Carpet Awards on May 15 at Listiak Auditorium at 5:30 pm which Julie Sheppard puts on each year to give out special awards to History Club students.

With the students headed off to the Nationals on June 14, Sheppard says they desperately need help to go to Nationals. "Prices for students attending Nationals have really gone up," Sheppard said, "and we need to raise funds quickly so our students can go."

Donations can be sent to North Shore Elementary School or sent to Julie Sheppard at Venmo@Julie-Shepoard-22 or to PayPal@JulieSheppard753.

## South Haven Rotary celebrates 70th Anniversary

***By Tom Renner***

The Rotary Club of South Haven marked its 70th year of service to the community and beyond with an anniversary celebration on Friday, May 1. The club was chartered in February, 1956 with an initial membership of 25, all men. Today the club's roll totals 65 men and women.

The City of South Haven, through a resolution, commended the club for exemplifying the core values of Rotary International by fostering fellowship, promoting integrity and advancing goodwill and peace throughout the community and beyond.

To recognize this milestone, the club honored five members who have collectively served 196 years. Pictured (standing left) with President-Elect Bob Metzen and President Amy Nichols, Robert Copping (seated), member since 1994, Tom Ruesink (1995), Larry Wittkop (1974) and Ted Weber (1987) who received the club's first Lifetime Achievement Award. Honoree Tom Fleming (1994) is not pictured.

The club also marked its commitment to Rotary International's work through its Paul Harris Fellowship program. Sixteen members are new Paul Harris Fellows and another 22 advanced their support of the program. Since its founding the South Haven club has had 105 members designated Paul Harris Fellows with contributions to Rotary International totaling more than one-half a million dollars.

Five members also were recognized for their support of Rotary International's Polio Plus program -- Jordan Alsup, Brook Blanchard, Robert Boerma, Robin McGonnis and the late Jeff Wilhelm.

# Ambassador Brink Tells audience why Ukraine matters

**Ambassador Bridget Brink**

**By James Windell**

As the first female United States ambassador to be assigned to a country being ravaged by war and as the ambassador to Ukraine during the Russia invasion, Bridget Brink is an expert on Eastern Europe.

She brought that expertise, achieved over 25 years as a diplomat, to South Haven on Thursday, April 30, 2026 when she held the rapt attention of a standing-room-only crowd at Lake Michigan College.

"American power and values," Ambassador Brink emphasized, "and that US 'soft power,' backed by 'hard power,' enables the U.S. to shape global outcomes: build alliances, address climate change, open markets/create jobs, and end conflicts."

With that core message, Brink framed Ukraine as a test of whether the United States will continue leading the free world rather than abandoning that role. "U.S. leadership abroad is tied directly to American security and prosperity at home," she argued, "rooted in freedom, democracy, and the rule of law."

She told the audience that her personal path into diplomacy and her public service was connected to her family history as her grandparents served in WWII. Growing up in a small Michigan community, she was raised by a single mother. She praised her education in public schools, but said that it was financial aid made college possible.

When she started college, she wanted to be a doctor to help people, but her goals shifted from a pre-med dream after struggling in biology and taking a political science class called "Quest for Justice." Then, as a junior, she had the opportunity to study in London and that "broadened my worldview." Brink was in Europe and watched the Berlin Wall fall on November 9, 1989. "That," she said, "helped set my career direction."

Ambassador Brink's first major assignment in the diplomatic arena was in the Balkans in the 1990s where she covered Kosovo from Belgrade and witnessed war crimes and atrocities first-hand.

She described learning "shoe-leather diplomacy" and coalition-building from Richard Holbrooke, a highly influential American diplomat best known for brokering the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords which ended the Bosnian War. His influence shaped her approach throughout her career.

Brink told the audience that Russia's war with Ukraine began in 2014 with the annexation of Crimea and the occupation of Donbas, a region in eastern Ukraine made up primarily of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts and located along the border with Russia. Those events escalated to a full-scale invasion on Feb 24, 2022.

She arrived in Kyiv in late May 2022, when the U.S. had not had a confirmed ambassador for over three years. "The embassy," she said, "had to be rebuilt from near-zero equipment." She went on to relate that there were early security realities. Her team slept at the embassy for months, there were limited protective capabilities before advanced air defense systems arrived, and she and her staff spent extensive time in shelters during air alerts."

However, she pushed to be allowed to travel outside Kyiv to oversee U.S. taxpayer assistance and engage regions affected by war, and, both with and without permission, she often travelled by train. It was also important for her to travel to Odesa, a major seaport on the Black Sea, in order to support efforts to reopen exports.

The ambassador summarized the mission as "win the war and win the future," including confronting corruption and weak institutions alongside supporting military defense. Brink characterized the conflict between Russia and Ukraine as morally clear: "Russia as aggressor, Ukraine as victim." She described large-scale atrocities that included women and children killed, children abducted, and many civilian deaths as well as the displacement of people.

Brink said the Biden administration's approach was "help Ukraine win," but she described a subsequent policy change after Trump's election toward forcing Ukraine into a "bad deal," citing a February 2025 Oval Office meeting with Zelenskyy. She said that US military aid and intelligence sharing were halted, including air defense munitions, and she concluded she could not carry out the policy and decided to resign.

She recounted that on April 4, 2025 that there was a cluster-munition strike on a playground in Kryvyi Rih that killed 18 people (mostly children) as a pivotal moment around the timing of her resignation.

She concluded her remarks by saying that supporting Ukraine is both morally right and in our country's national interest. The reason why it is in our interest to defend Ukraine is that helps to deter wider Russian imperial ambitions, it protects NATO and Europe, a key security and economic partner, and it prevents sending the wrong signals – signals that embolden other aggressors.

In a brief question and answer period, Brink was asked how long peace negotiations take. Her response, which initially sounded humorous, was that peace negotiations "take forever" and require persistence. Another question from the audience was related to how we stop Putin. She replied that just like on the playground you have to stand up to a bully.

The final question of the evening was about her future. She responded to that by saying that she still wants to make an impact and so she is "running for Congress in Michigan's 7th Congressional District." That answer was met with applause.

# How bright lights are endangering starry nights

**Dr. Anne Blackwell**

Light pollution, or the excessive use of artificial lighting at night, is a problem because it disrupts peoples' sleep, animal migrations, and the grand view of the twinkling stars above. Dr. Anne Blackwell, an astronomer at the University of Michigan, will discuss the issue of worsening light pollution and efforts to combat it at the South Haven Speakers Series program Thursday, May 14 at 7 p.m., at the Lake Michigan College—South Haven campus.

Research shows light pollution is costly, disturbing wildlife, harming human health, and blocking our view of the universe. A study in Science magazine showed that the number of visible stars is decreasing by 7% to 10% a year. A child born where 250 stars are visible today might only see about 100 by the time he or she is 18.

"My worry is how disconnected we are becoming from nature and our ancestral knowledge," said Blackwell, co-coordinator and longtime member of Michigan Dark Skies, a group of astronomers, bird watchers, and environmentalists advocating for more natural, less-intrusive lighting and for dark sky parks. Blackwell has helped to develop and present educational programs for the public, ranging from school students to senior citizens.

In a dark-sky preserve movement, communities in Michigan and nationally are limiting the amount of light that homes and businesses can disperse and requiring special low-wattage exterior lamps and sconces that direct light downward. The city of Pittsburgh, for instance, has begun dimming its streetlights, projecting its annual energy bills will drop nearly $1 million.

"Overbright lights are depriving us of the stellar spectacle that has inspired humanity for ages," said Michael McCarthy, an author and Speakers Series board member. "During the day, South Haven offers wonderful views of the lake and sunset–is it possible we could provide an after-dark experience of a breathtaking, brilliant sky?"

The event begins with refreshments at 6:30 p.m., followed by the presentation at 7 p.m.

For more information, visit southhavenspeakers-series.org

# South Haven City Committee of the Whole discusses utility capacity

**By James Windell**

The first piece of new business to come up before the South Haven City Council Committee of the Whole when they met on Monday, May 4, 2026 was whether the City's utilities were at or near capacity.

City Manager Kate Hosier led off the discussion by saying her goal was to address recurring comments and questions regarding "limited capacity." She turned it over to Dana Burd, Director of Public Works, who framed his presentation in three parts: water, wastewater, and the City's municipal electric utility.

Right off the bat, Burd stated that there are no immediate drinking water system capacity concerns. "The system is considered well managed, with capital improvements planned and funded on appropriate timelines," Burd said.

Despite serving about 5,900 water customers with the peak seasonal population estimated to be around 70,000 during summer and holiday weekends, Burd said he has no concerns about the ability of the system to meet the needs of all customers.

Burd told the City Council that water capacity is considered across multiple components, not just plant output. It also involves treatment plant chemical and disinfection capacity, distribution hydraulics, fire flow scenarios, pipe sizing, booster pumps, and elevated storage tank operations.

However, Burd stated the near-term focus is on replacing aging infrastructure that breaks frequently and causes outages, plus required service line replacements and other state-driven regulatory requirements.

As he addressed the wastewater (sewer) capacity, Burd emphasized that wastewater capacity is more nuanced than water because it's an "open" system and affected by what enters the network as well as by rain, snowmelt inflow and infiltration.

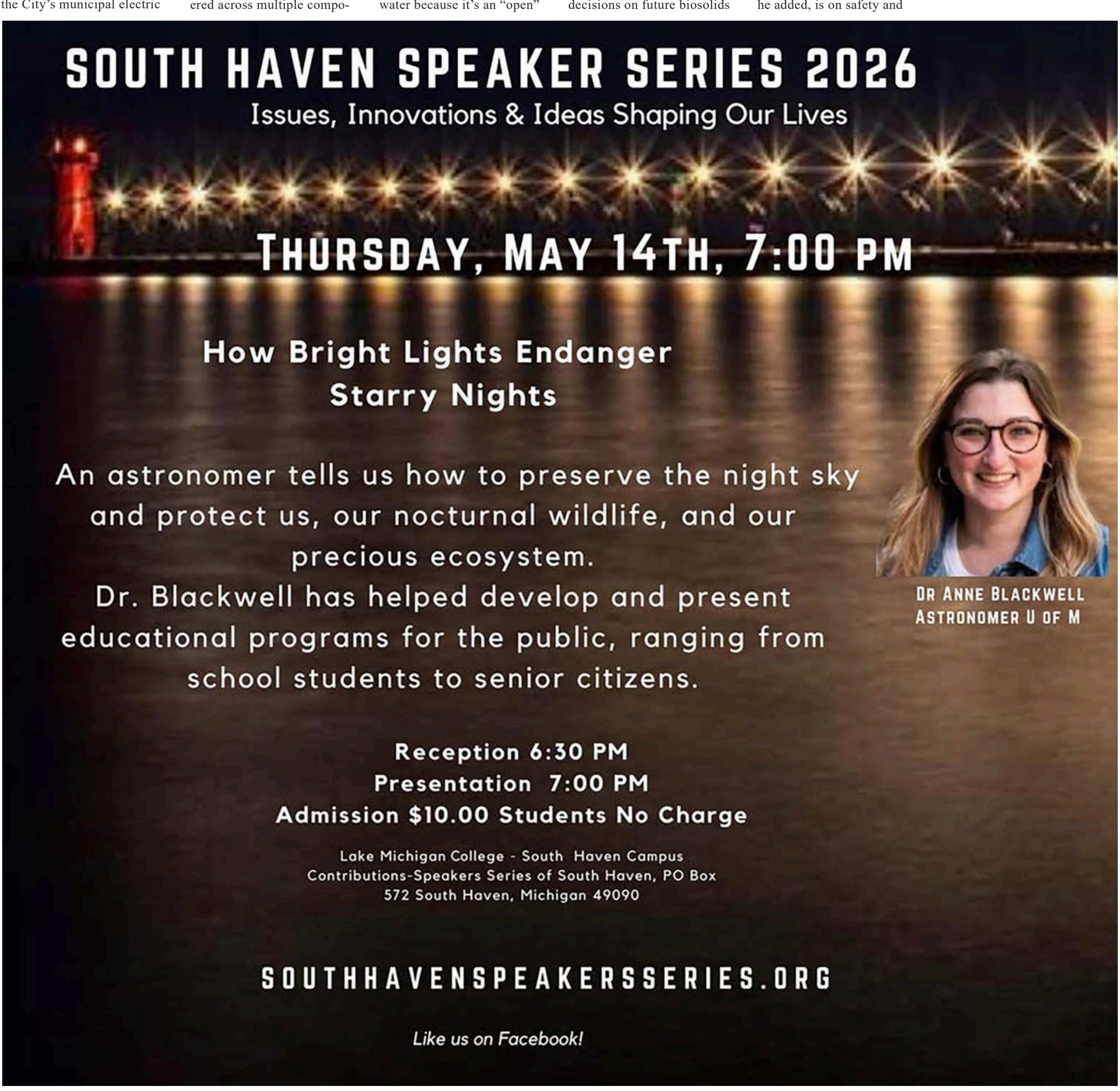
As he described the sewer system, he said that the City had approximately 30 pump with pipe sizes ranging down to 6 to 12 inches in many areas, but with some of those pipes nearly 100 years old. As he said about the water supply, though, Burd stated there was no "immediate wastewater capacity concern for growth and development."

Burd went on to say that planned wastewater improvements include additional clarifiers, aeration expansion, and decisions on future biosolids management.

He offered homeowner guidance by saying that homeowners should have routine lateral inspection and cleaning. In addition, residents should consider backflow prevention and be cautious finishing basements below system elevation. Plugs, he said, are recommended for floor drains in older homes where footing tiles and floor drains may be tied together.

Finally, in addressing electric utility capacity, Burd stated there are no immediate electric capacity concerns. The electric planning focus, he added, is on safety and reliability and cost management rather than direct public health discharge and consumption issues. He said that purchased power costs are heavily influenced by system peaks and by reducing peak demand customer costs can be materially reduced.

Burd concluded his remarks telling the Council that the utility currently does not generate power, but is exploring options to offset peak demand. Some of the options he mentioned include small natural-gas generation (not a full-scale plant), battery storage, and solar power.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# 2ND FRONT PAGE

## District Library Board meeting draws many Lawrence Township residents asking for update to branch library contract

DECATUR - Approximately 75 people attended the Tuesday, April 28, Van Buren District Library Board meeting at Webster Memorial Library, Decatur.

The meeting again saw a large representation of Lawrence Township residents seeking answers from the Library Board to update a decades-old contract signed by the board and the seven branch libraries.

Lawrence Township Clerk Tracie Rindfield was one of those in attendance at the meeting speaking as a taxpayer. She said, "As a taxpayer in this community, I want to speak plainly.

"You came to us - not once, not twice, but three separate times - asking for millages to fund the Van Buren District Library. And each time, the taxpayers showed up and approved of those millages in good faith. We believed in the value of our library system, and we trusted that partnership would mean something.

"But now we are sitting here having a conversation about whether the Lawrence branch could be shut down.

"That should concern every single taxpayer," said Rindfield.

She continued, "Because from our perspective, we have upheld our end of the agreement. We continue to pay into this system, year after year, without fail. Yet now we are told that maintaining a physical presence in our community is optional.

"That doesn't feel like partnership. That feels like a shift in expectations after the fact.

"Good faith goes both ways. And when taxpayers step up repeatedly to support an organization, they expect stability, commitment, and a shared responsibility to the communities that made that support possible," said Rindfield.

She concluded, "Decisions made here - especially ones that impact access to a local library - will not be forgotten. Because the next time a library millage comes before the voters, people will remember how this moment was handled.

"This isn't just about a building. It's about trust," said Rindfield.

Another Lawrence Township resident, Noel J. McCaw, spoke before the VBDL Board of Trustees and Library Director, Dan Hutchins.

"I would like to begin by acknowledging your position regarding the addendum negotiations with township boards. I recognize that this process presents significant challenges as you work to safeguard the district's long-term interests, ensure consistent application across branches, and prevent scenarios where a single exception leads to numerous separate agreements. Your concerns in this matter are entirely understandable. I also want to thank you for the thoughtful and prudent way you manage taxpayer dollars that help keep the VBDL system running. However, many of us taxpayers are increasingly concerned with how the recent addendum negotiations have unfolded. Township residents are the same taxpayers who also support and fund VBDL, and we want the same outcome: local libraries that are open and accessible, providing valuable resources and opportunities to all residents.

"The VBDL Board of Trustees' current lack of engagement is difficult to reconcile with its stated mission and goals to provide "...equitable access to a world of resources, reading and lifelong learning," act as "...an innovative gateway to information, culture and enrichment," and "maintain communication with local communities to strengthen relationships, resulting in easier access for future support."

She continued, "From Lawrence Township's point of view, the outstanding issues are limited in scope but remain significant. The first is the use of "may" versus "shall" in the addendum as it pertains to funding disbursement for building maintenance, repairs, and improvements. The Township is not asking for increased funding or special treatment; they are asking for dependable commitments that allow them to budget responsibly for facilities that directly support library access. Predictable funding is a foundational governance principle, one the VBDL Board itself relies on through stable millage revenue to plan staffing, services, and operations. Discretionary language makes responsible long-term planning difficult for small communities with limited financial flexibility."

McCaw said, "The second issue is the absence of a defined end date or renewal term in the proposed addendum. An agreement that continues indefinitely, with the only path to renegotiation being a 180-day cancellation clause, places townships in a position where confrontation is required simply to revisit terms. That approach does not reflect a healthy or sustainable partnership.

"Townships are instead asking for a time-limited agreement with a set renewal point to support clear governance, responsible budgeting, and maintain positive relationships between the VBDL Board of Trustees and township boards.

"If agreements cannot be reached, one or more township branch libraries in Van Buren County will close. While it is often suggested that residents could simply travel to a neighboring branch, that assumption overlooks the reality of this county. Van Buren County is overwhelmingly rural, with limited public transportation and a heavy reliance on personal vehicles. For residents with dependable transportation options, a closure may be an inconvenience. For others, it effectively eliminates access altogether."

McCaw continued, "Closing township branches would disproportionately burden residents who already face barriers to access and would result in uneven availability of core library services across the county. This creates a clear disparity in outcomes, as the residents most impacted by branch closures are the same individuals the library's mission commits to serving equitably. When access to resources depends on the ability to drive farther or navigate transportation limitations, access is no longer equitable, it becomes conditional. Such an outcome conflicts directly with VBDL's stated mission to provide equitable access to reading and learning opportunities.

"In closing, my request is simple: please return to the table and work respectfully and collaboratively towards a resolution with each township. VBDL's mission is to provide "equitable access to a world of resources, reading, and lifelong learning," and that commitment must guide decisions made here. Upholding that promise requires more than words on a website; it requires choices, behaviors, and actions. If negotiations are stalled for reasons beyond consistency, those reasons should be stated plainly so the public understands what is blocking progress. Transparency and accountability are not optional; they are essential to restoring trust and working together in good faith. I am asking you to reengage with our township boards to protect and sustain our libraries."

Bonita Suiter, of Lawrence, spoke before the board saying, "The Lawrence Library is the first place I went when I moved here, even though I was new to the area. I was welcomed there and my relationship with the library has only grown."

She then directed her comments to the board, saying, "You have been appointed by members of your communities to represent the taxpayers and to ensure that each community in the district has a library.

"You each have a responsibility to us to facilitate a dialogue between the board and each township. We pay taxes to ensure that we have a library in the Lawrence community and if it closes, you still get our money. At this point, our tax dollars are going to pay lawyers because people aren't building relationships."

She continued, "We need people on this library board who understand the importance of building strong relationships with each township, and who are capable and willing to doing that. I urge you to please meet with and dialogue with the townships who have asked to meet with you. I ask you to really hear what they are saying about their concerns and work with them rather than against them to find a solution. That is what we as taxpayers expect."

She continued, "The fact that we are at the point where more than one township is is threatening to close their library, that tells me that the library board needs to do more to support all of the communities in our library system. I hope you understand how upsetting the threatened closing of the Lawrene branch has been for the people of Lawrence, Also, the general public does not understand the dynamics of the township owning the building so, if the library closes, many will not likely place the fault on the Township."

Suiter praised the efforts of retired Lawrence Branch Librarian Denise Campagna, now the Lawrence Township representative on the Library Board.

"I cannot thank Denise Campagna enough for her passion for finding a solution to a problem that never should have gotten to this point and for encouraging discussions between the Library Board and the townships. I have not heard that other members of the of this Board have joined her in those meetings."

She concluded, "If the rest of you are not also willing to do that work, or do not feel you have the time to do that work, I urge you to consider whether being on the board is making the best use of your personal skills, abilities, and time."

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## Antwerp Township Supervisor seeks "meaningful negotiations" with VB District Library Board

Antwerp Township Supervisor Daniel Ruzick, who attended the April 28 Van Buren District Library board meeting, released the following statement shortly after the meeting. It read:

"At the April 28 meeting of the Van Buren District Library Board, the Library Board continued to pursue an addendum approach, including a proposal offering $7,500 and $25,000 in back payment. While we appreciate the effort, this proposal does not address the core issue, nor does it account for the immediate need to replace critical building components, including the roof and windows, with estimated costs of $50,733 for the roof and $95,852 for the windows.

"Antwerp Township's position remains consistent: after multiple voter-approved millages supporting the growth and expansion of library services, there must also be a fair and sustainable commitment to maintaining the facility that houses those services.

"The Township is not seeking to remove the library. We value its presence and remain committed to ensuring continued service for our residents. However, we are seeking a new, standalone agreement that includes a dedicated capital funding structure to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Antwerp Township library building, rather than placing 100 percent of the financial responsibility on the Township.

"With the June 14 deadline approaching, we are urging the Library Board to move beyond addendum proposals and engage in meaningful negotiations. We have also requested the involvement of a neutral third-party mediator to help both parties reach a fair and timely resolution,"

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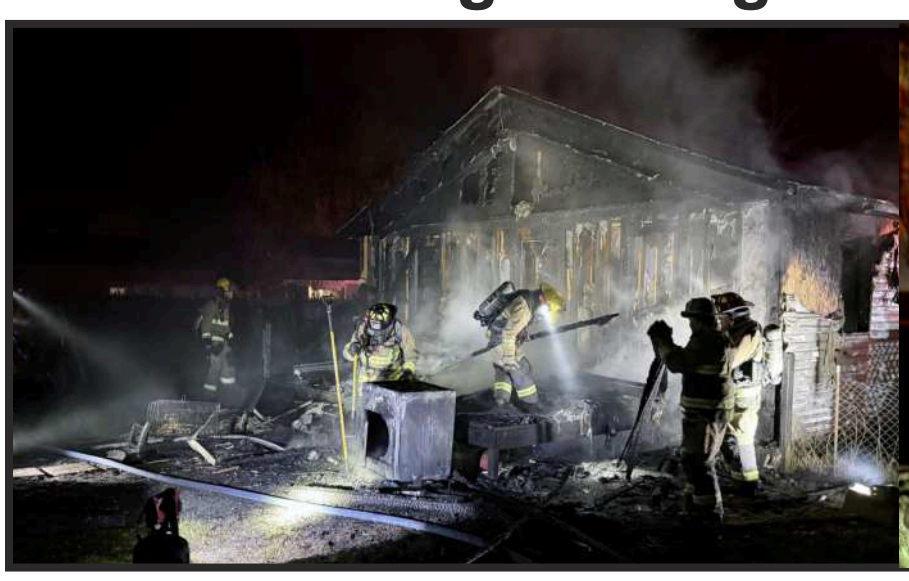
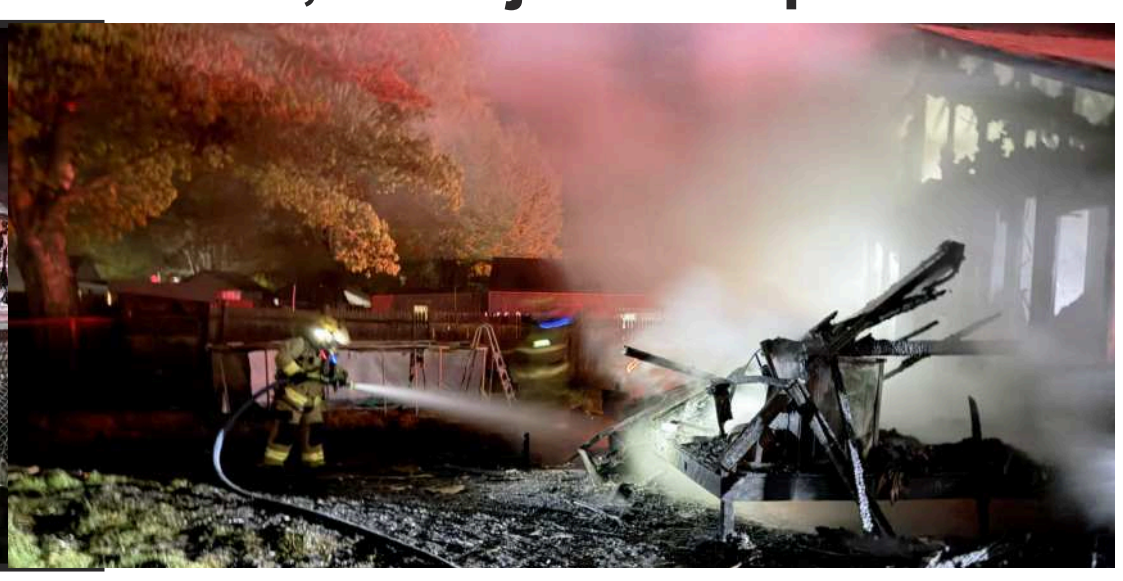
# Fire damages Bangor residence, no injuries reported





Fire Sunday night extensively damaged a residence in the city of Bangor (Van Buren County).

Firefighters from Bangor Community Fire Department were dispatched at 10:20 p.m. to a structure fire in the 200 block of Main Street.

Mutual aid assistance was requested from South Haven Area Emergency Services (SHAES) and Columbia Township Fire Department.

The rear of the residence was fully engulfed in flames upon arrival. Flames had spread to the interior of the home.

The residents safely evacuated from the residence.

The fire appeared to have initiated on a rear porch. A cause is under investigation.

No injuries were reported. Van Buren Emergency Medical Services and Indiana Michigan Power also responded.

# Draft of the 2026-2027 budget given to SHAWSA

***By James Windell***

The draft budget for Fiscal Year 2026/2027 was presented to the South Haven Area Water Sewer Authority (SHAWSA) at its regular meeting on Tuesday, April 28, 2026.Reviewing the details of the budget were Rosemary Zink, SHAWSA finance director, and Public Works Director Dana Burd.Burd indicated that the budget presented is in line with the Authority's most recent Cost-of-Service Study and multi-year rate plan. SHAWSA has received a historic amount of grant funding totaling $20 million in recent years to support $42 million in ongoing water and wastewater investment. Zink and Burd presented the following revenue and expenditure report:Water Fund Total Revenue: $ 7,236,545 Water Fund Total Expenditures: $ 18,544,162 Sewer Fund Total Revenue $ 6,126,446 Sewer Fund Total Expenditures $ 6,915,783Old Authority Total Revenue: $ 1,516,845

Old Authority Total Expenditures $ 806,187

Total of all Revenue: $ 14,879,836

Total of all Expenditures: $ 26,266,132

Although the expenditures exceed revenues for FY 2026-27 for Water and Sewer Funds, Zink said that this is not cause for concern. Zink and Burd explained that the expenses shown for capital outlay are due to large ongoing construction projects. These projects include such items as the new elevated tank and booster station construction, the standpipe and booster station demolition, and the lead service line replacements. They stated that these will be capitalized and moved to work-in-progress at the end of the year and then depreciated over the life of the asset.

In discussing the draft budget, a SHAWSA Board member raised a concern about having a more deliberate, structured approach to finding cost savings and efficiencies. Burd responded by saying that primary spending drivers are regulatory compliance mandates, for instance, "lead lines, consent order requirements, and standpipe work." He added that there is a strong focus on securing grant funding to reduce the customer cost burden.

The SHAWSA board members will take the proposed budget to each of their respective boards and commissions for comments over the next 30 days. The budget is typically adopted by SHAWSA at the June meeting along with any necessary amendments to the current FY 2025-26 budget.

In other news from SHAWSA, Covert Township Supervisor Daywi Cook attended the meeting and indicated her interest in having Covert Township join SHAWSA.

It was noted that prior discussions included whether Covert would join as water-only (retail water customer) versus also joining as a sewer customer. The understanding on the SHAWSA Board was that the intergovernmental contract would need an amendment to allow new members. However, board members were open to putting the topic back on a future agenda.

# South Haven Area Emergency Services celebrates 30th Year

The SHAES Authority, consisting of the city of South Haven and townships of Casco, Geneva and South Haven, was founded in 1996.

"SHAES has blossomed into an organization that has surpassed anyone's expectations," said Executive Director Brandon Hinz. "Fire-based Advanced Life Support transport such as we provide is an oddity in Michigan, an oddity in the nation. It's an oddity because it's hard. It's difficult to manage, it's difficult to operate. It takes a village to provide this type of service."

SHAES provides its service using a combination of career and paid-on-call staff, another rarity according to Hinz. "Most fire departments that provide transport EMS are much larger than SHAES," Hinz explained. He noted that in Michigan, out of 1,001 fire departments only 23 provide ALS transport.

The SHAES staff consists of 22 career and 29 paid-on-call members. A recently created

cadet program numbers five members. The department operates from three stations. In 2025 the department responded to a record 2,920 alarms, 2,021 medical and 899 fire calls.

A highlight of the banquet was the recognition of members for service and accomplishments.

Firefighter/paramedic Cody Sedlak, a member of the department for 10 years, is the Firefighter of the Year. He served as a paid-on-call member for four years before joining the career ranks. The honor of Firefighter of the Year is determined by members of the department.

"Cody told me once that it was always his dream to become a SHAES firefighter/paramedic," said Hinz. "His ownership of this organization is almost extreme. He is our "go to" person when a task needs to be completed." An example was the way Sedlak took the lead in outfitting the three new grass fire rigs acquired by the department in recent months.

The SHAES Leadership Award was presented to firefighter/paramedic Paul Pant. A relatively new member of the career staff, in only 2.5 years Pant has taken the lead in securing outside financial support for the department. He has also been in the forefront of creating an awareness within the department of the need to serve members' mental health needs.

"Thanks to Paul we're focusing on breaking a stigma surrounding mental health among public servants," said Hinz. "In cooperation with the South Haven Police Department, a support program has been created to address the mental health needs of our members."

"An average person experiences three to four traumatic events in their lifetime," observed Hinz.

LEFT-TO-RIGHT: Paul Pant, Leadership Award recipient; Brandon Hinz, SHAES Executive Director; Cody Sedlak, Firefighter of the Year.

"Our staff experiences an average of two per month. This can take a toll over the course of a career."

A formal swearing-in ceremony welcomed nine new members – Luke Thompson FF, Sam Rose FF, Ayden Quinn FF, Josh Klein FF/EMT-B, Corey Heuer FF/EMT-B, Jacon Infante FF/EMT-B, Lily McCorry FF/EMT-B, Brock Lovell FF/EMT-B and Jacob Mulder FF/EMT-B.

Years of Service pins were presented to several members – Allan Overhiser (40 years), Tom Renner (35 years), Ross Stein and Brad Filbrandt (30 years) and Cody Sedlak (10 years).

Three members received promotions during the past year – Captain Brian Montgomery, Lieutenants Phillip Quinn and Rex Haner.

A fun highlight of the banquet was the formal swearing-in ceremony of the cadets – Scott Ritchie, Alyssa Ockerman, Nick Rainey, Brenden Cramer and Payton Haner. The ceremony was held at the very beginning because several cadets needed to leave in order to attend their high school prom.

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# Blue Star Mothers honor Class of 2026 recruits with cords for grads

The Blue Star Mothers of Southwest Michigan 179 honored 13 young men and women who have committed to serve their country after graduation with a reception on Saturday, April 25, at the Paw Paw Lions Club. Cords for Grads is a tradition where recruits are presented with a certificate of appreciation and a cord of red, white, and blue. The cords are to be worn at their high school graduation as a symbol of their commitment. Recruits for this year by branch, name, and school: United States Military Academy at West Point - Aiden Beam, Gobles; Army - Hayden Long, Mattawan; Jesse Munn, Bloomingdale; Christian Michols, Allegan; Tyler Thomas, Allegan; Darrian Raab, Dowagiac. United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Navy - Andrew Olson, Paw Paw. United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Navy - Gavin McCain, Mattawan; Marines - Kyle Hemenway, Decatur; Alexander Platt, Gobles; Elizabeth Fetkenhier, Mattawan. Air Force ROTC - Matthew Engel, Mattawan. Air Force - Aiden Myers, Mattawan.

# Paw Paw Schools' innovation showcase spotlights SME Prime Partnership and new STEAM Lab debut

On Friday, May 1, Paw Paw Public Schools (PPPS) served as host to an Innovation Showcase in the newly renovated STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) Wing at Paw Paw High School (PPHS). Local manufacturers were invited to learn about the district's partnership with the SME Education Foundation and how it is preparing students for high-demand careers. Through the SME PRIME program, the collaboration provides industry-aligned manufacturing and engineering opportunities, including equipment, curriculum, teacher training, scholarships, and program support. Attendees toured the new STEAM lab, where students and staff demonstrated equipment. According to the National Association of Manufacturers, the U.S. is projected to face a shortage of 1.9 million manufacturing workers by 2033. PPHS has completed a full renovation of its STEAM Lab, featuring new equipment, flexible furniture, and a design that promotes innovation and collaboration. Construction is also underway on a new multipurpose addition for hosting robotics, cheer, band, and athletic events. Courier-Leader photo/Paul Garrod

# Mattawan Lions Club serves as host to Senior and Veterans Expo

The Mattawan Lions Club served as host to the third annual Senior & Veterans Expo on Monday, May 4, at the Antwerp Activity Center, 24821 Front Ave., Mattawan. A total of 42 vendors offered information, resources, and services tailored specifically for senior citizens and veterans. Attendees had the opportunity to connect with organizations providing support in areas such as healthcare services, veterans benefits and resources, community and senior programs, and much more. Courier-Leader photos/Paul Garrod

# Paw Paw Community Chorus holds Spring Concert

The Paw Paw Community Chorus held its 25th Annual Spring Concert, Sunday, May 3, at the Paw Paw United Methodist Church located at 420 W. Michigan Ave., Paw Paw. The chorus was under the direction of Theresa Vaughn and accompanied on piano by Evonne Heystek. Courier-Leader photo/Paul Garrod

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## "1970 photo from Paw Paw found on Scottish beach"

Dear Editor::

Lyle Howard Leonard and Mabel Frances Warren (Leonard) were my paternal grandparents. His friends knew him as "Howard" or "LH", so seeing him called "Lyle" on the back of this photo is a little unusual. The article is largely right about where he lived, except he was born in Rudyard, MI (Chippewa County). The Soo figured more prominently for him at different points in his life and is likely what he would have thought of as "home". The lady on the left in the blue dress is my grandma, and that's definitely their old house. I don't recognize the three people on the right, nor do my parents or aunt.

Howard and Mabel each had a parent who was born in Canada (King, ON and Bruce, ON). In the generations before that, most of their ancestors were from Scotland, and some were from England. Howard's mom was a Gordon, and said one of her ancestors was born in Gordon Castle (it's not clear to me if this would have been in 1806, 1777, or earlier).

How this photo made it to Scotland is a complete mystery to us. My dad is speculating the three people on the right may have been visiting relatives from Canada, but we really don't know.

Todd L

## Oshtemo residents oppose data centers (BESS)

Dear Editor:

Another well written article Mike. My only request is to rewrite the article and swap out the words "data centers" for "Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)", then republish the "new" article.

The Oshtemo board quietly worked on bringing a BESS to the edge of the county bordering Van Buren county in a rural and agricultural area. The neighborhood was furious when they finally found out. The township residents are now rallying to recall the board now, for all the reasons in your article.

Thank you,

Dan Lundgren

Oshtemo Township

# Detroit Lions vs FOP charity basketball game Friday

The Van Buren County Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #136 is proud to present its 38th Annual Basketball Game with the local F.O.P. All-Star Team vs. The Detroit Lion's Legends Basketball team at the Paw Paw Middle School Gymnasium on Friday, May 8, 2026. The game will be at 7:00 p.m. Tickets to the game are $25.00 general admission, 2 for $40 or a special family ticket for mom, dad, and all the kids is $50.00.

Proceeds go to the Van Buren County Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #136. To order tickets online please visit our website at: wolverineproductions.org or fop136.publicsafetypsa.com. For any additional information or to get tickets by phone please call the ticket hotline at 1-800-445-2143.

**For more information or to place an ad Call (269) 657-3072 or 657-5080 BEFORE MONDAY AT 5PM**

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# VIEWPOINT

## RIP Spirit, you were mocked by many, but this frequent traveler loved you

MIKE'S MUSINGS

MIKE WILCOX ■ PUBLISHER ■

The news that Spirit Airlines has shut down operations after more than three decades in the sky feels like the end of an era—and not just for bargain travelers.

For this frequent Spirit traveler, the news was devastating. I woke up to it early Saturday morning. In only a few hours I was to fly on Spirit from Detroit to Orlando. I had made this same monthly trip for over 25 years, probably 250 flights but who is counting. Spirit was my go-to airline. My favorite.

I couldn't make it one last time because Spirit executives decided to cancel all flights and halt business operations at midnight. Fortunately for me I was able to rebook on Delta. My heart goes out to those travelers that weren't as lucky as I. Finding alternative flights can be stressful and at the very least throw off arrival times.

For years, Spirit was the airline people loved to complain about… right before they booked it anyway. It wasn't glamorous. It wasn't comfortable. But it made flying possible for millions who otherwise couldn't afford it. That matters more than we often admit.

On the other hand, my experience with Spirit was phenomenal. I never experienced a cancelled flight and 80% of the time, flights were on time. That's pretty darn good for an airline that many love to bash.

This wasn't a collapse out of nowhere. Spirit had been walking a financial tightrope for years—bankruptcies, failed merger attempts, and razor-thin margins. When fuel prices surged and a last-minute rescue deal fell apart, the math finally stopped working.

Still, numbers don't capture what's really lost here.

Spirit forced the entire airline industry to behave. When it entered a market, fares dropped—sometimes significantly—because competitors had to respond.

Now that pressure is gone. Travelers, especially families and budget-conscious flyers, will feel it first and hardest.

And then there are the people. Roughly 17,000 employees suddenly found themselves out of work, many learning the news overnight.

Pilots, flight attendants, mechanics—these aren't abstract numbers. They're livelihoods, communities, and careers built around an airline that simply vanished.

Many of those people lived in Michigan, where Spirit was a hub. Many of you aren't aware but Spirit got it start at Detroit Metro Airport 32 years ago. As it grew it re-located to Fort Lauderdale, but for many of us, we remembered and were loyal to its Detroit roots.

It's easy to debate who's to blame, fuel prices, government policy, blocked mergers, or a business model that pushed costs as low as possible. The truth is probably all of the above. But focusing only on blame misses the bigger point.

Spirit Airlines was messy, frustrating, and often mocked—but it democratized air travel.

Its bright yellow planes represented something bigger: the idea that flying shouldn't be a luxury reserved for a few. With its disappearance, we may be heading back toward a system where affordability takes a back seat to comfort and consolidation.

And that's why, even if you never loved flying Spirit, it's still worth saying:

It's a shame to see it go.

## Sheriff's Report- Break-in call leads to bench warrant arrest

Van Buren County Sheriff's Office Uniform Response handled a break-in call in Geneva Township. Upon investigation, it wasn't a break-in, but a civil complaint. One of the individuals involved had a bench warrant for their arrest, so they were lodged on it," said Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott.

Uniform Response handled a larceny from outside a vacant residence in Hamilton Township. "Anyone with any information is asked to call our office," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response handled a call in the Village of Mattawan in which two children in diapers were in the roadway. Deputies searched the area and were able to figure out where they belonged. The children were returned to the parents, and the case is being reviewed by CPS.

Uniform Response handed an assault call in Geneva Township. The assault turned out to be unfounded, however, one of the individuals on scene had a bench warrant for their arrest. The individual was arrested on the warrant. Methamphetamine was found during the arrest, and the charges are now being submitted on that as well.

"Our office participated in the DEA Takeback event this past weekend. Just a reminder, we have numerous red med boxes located throughout the county so citizens can dispose of their medications every week. The locations are posted on our website and are all over the county," said Sheriff Abbott.

"Friday, May 8, at 7 p.m. is our annual Detroit Legends versus Van Buren County FOP All-Stars Basketball Game. It's being held once again at the Paw Paw Middle School Gym. If you've never been, you are missing out on a good time. The Legends take pictures and do autographs at halftime and consistently engage with the crowd, especially the kids. For tickets, call 1-800-445-2143 or go to: fop136.publicsafetytypsa.com. Hope to see you there." said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response handled an assault call in Decatur Township. "The investigation found that a juvenile assaulted his mother and it's an ongoing issue with this happening," said Sheriff Abbott. The juvenile was taken and lodged at a juvenile detention center for domestic assault.

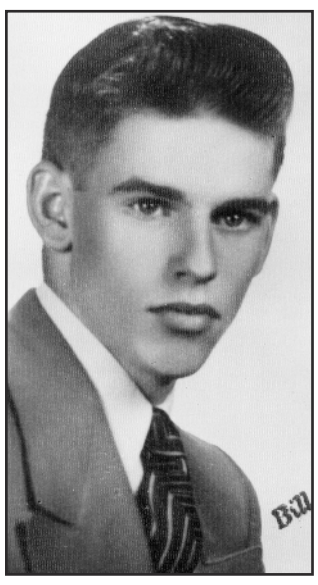
Uniform Response handled a trespassing call in Antwerp Township. A homeless individual was sleeping in a van on private property, so they were advised to leave and not come back as the property owners did not want them there. The individual left and advised they wouldn't return.

"There's a new scam going around that is going to cell phones or emails about you being a perfect candidate for a job. They want you to click on a link so an expert resume builder can help you update it. As always, once you do, they scam you with the information they just obtained. This scam is coming from a Gmail address," said Sheriff Abbott.

"We have received calls throughout the year of people stopping at apple orchards, pear orchards, etc. to pick fruit without getting permission from the farmer. This past week, different individuals have been stealing asparagus from different fields doing just that. Keep in mind, that is a larceny and illegal trespassing if the farmer chooses to press charges if you get caught. If you are one of those individuals that doesn't think it's a big deal taking from a farmer's livelihood as it's a big field or orchard and get caught, you'll have no one to blame but yourself when you get charged and have a criminal record moving forward. We received information this past week about individuals' doing just that at an asparagus field and the suspect's fleeing every time before the farmer could get to them," said Sheriff Abbott.

# OBITUARIES

### *William (Bill) Sousley*



William (Bill) Sousley passed peacefully at his home in Lawrence, MI on Wednesday, April 22, 2026, surrounded by his family. Bill was born on September 27, 1932, to Chester Eugene and Mable Sousley. He was the eldest of 7 siblings. He is survived by his children, Kim Thompson and Kelly (Carrie) Sousley, grandchildren Amanda (Dave) Thomas, Amy (Michael) Ohlert, Matthew Thompson and Audrey Gross, and great grandchildren Korben, Jade, Evie, Tamarra and Delaney. He was preceded in death by his parents, sisters Georgia, Gladys and Gari and brother Chris. His sisters Gertrude and Gayle also survive to tell the stories of growing up.

Bill served his country proudly in the Korean War and was recently awarded a 50-year commemoration with the American Legion Post 174. He took pride that a Sousley was one of the Iwo Jima flag raisers. He was proud to have been an Honor Flight recipient and cherished his time in Washington DC with his comrades Dick Kroeg and Chuck Moden.

An avid sports enthusiast and hunter provided him with many years of enjoyment and stories too numerous to tell. He was a devoted supporter of boys and girls youth sports and taking care of the ball fields. He was a Little League umpire, a softball coach, a Boy Scout commissioner, a runner and hiker. He shared a hunting cabin 'up north' with his dear friends, Charlie Brown, Dick Kroeg and frequent hunting buddies. The tales Camp Bologna could tell!

He was a hard man for a father but mellowed to become a loving and patient grandpa…the title he enjoyed the most. He loved his family fiercely and did not suffer fools lightly. You knew what he thought of you. He loved to tease and loved it more when it was dished back…preferably with a sassy attitude.

In his later years, he shared many of them with his dear companion, Reva Carrington, prior to her passing. The last five years were devoted to his lion-hearted tiny dog, Peaches, a dog he swore was smarter than most people!

Family and friends will gather to share the memories of Bill on Saturday, May 16, at the Lawrence United Methodist Church, 122 S. Exchange St., Lawrence. Visitation will be from 10 a.m. to noon. A memorial service will take place at noon, followed by a military honors funeral at the Veteran's Hill Cemetery, Lawrence. A luncheon will be held at the American Legion Post 174.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions to the American Legion Post 174 will be welcomed.

Share a memory or sign the online guestbook at adamspawpaw.com

### *Thomas Andrews Imus*

Thomas Andrews Imus, 83, of Paw Paw, passed away Friday, May 1, 2026, at Centrica Rose Arbor Place. Born April 24, 1943 in Kalamazoo to Robert A. and Jean E. (Sikkenga) Imus, Tom grew up working the family dairy farm alongside his parents and siblings. A 1961 graduate of Mattawan High School, he went on to attend Ferris State University before working for many years at R.A. Imus Inc. Chrysler/Dodge Dealership in Paw Paw. A gifted mechanic, Tom continued operation of the family shop after his father's passing.

A proud lifetime member of the North American Hunting Club, Tom was an avid hunter, fisherman, and gardener who took as much pride in his perfectly mowed lawn as he did in his flower and vegetable beds. Each season he grew beautiful Zinnias for Linda, always keeping fresh bouquets throughout the house. He loved the thrill of a good gamble, and his record casino run clocked in at 26 straight hours.

Tom was preceded in death by his beloved partner of 33 years, Linda M. Robbins; his parents, Robert A. and Jean E. (Sikkenga) Imus; his brothers Clark Imus and Bill Imus; and his sisters Judith Imus and Martha (Imus) Forrest.

He is survived by his children Lisa (Dean) Ransler of Kalamazoo, Troy (Shelly) Imus of Portage, and Tom (Kelly) Imus of Paw Paw; eight grandchildren, Matt and Clint Sutterfield, Taylor and Madison Imus, and Sadie, Emma, Lily, and Ryley Imus; his sister Roberta (Blaine) Rex of Decatur; many nieces and nephews; and his two beloved cats, Lil Bit and Callie, who are in search of a new forever home - together.

A memorial service will be held from 4 to 7 PM on Friday, May 8, 2026, at First Presbyterian Church, 120 Pine Street, Paw Paw, Michigan. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be directed to Centrica Navigators Hospice or the Van Buren County Animal Shelter. Friends and family may share a condolence message online at www.joldersma-klein.com.

THE COURIER LEADER
PAW PAW FLASHES
SOUTH HAVEN BEACON

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# Michigan 39th House District candidates speak in Paw Paw

PAW PAW - Candidates running for the Michigan 39th District House seat addressed voters May 2 at a forum in Paw Paw, explaining why they believe they are the right choice for the position.

The seat is currently held by Rep. Pauline Wendzel.

Indivisible Paw Paw, a non-partisan organization based in Van Buren County, invited Democratic candidates Kerry Tapper and Zachary Shinabarger to the question-and-answer session. After the Q &A, Green Party candidate Jared Polonowski addressed the group of 30 attendees at the Paw Paw District Library. Rep. Wendzel did not respond to requests to attend the forum.

Forum topics included "Project Lighthouse," a bill recently introduced in the House by Rep. Wendzel that aims to repeal the green initiatives passed in the 20234-2024 Michigan legislative session; data centers and AI; housing and affordability; healthcare; and education. Several audience members also asked questions concerning the 39th District.

In response to questions on Project Lighthouse and green energy, Tapper and Shinabarger expressed a need to lower energy costs.

While Tapper cited a number of factors which play into Michigan's rising energy costs, she said construction of new energy projects will take time to formulate into production facilities. Both agreed that local governmental entities should be involved with planning when it comes to alternative energy sources.

Shinabarger pointed out that neither he nor Tapper have taken campaign donations from big energy companies, while opponent Rep. Wendzel has accepted donations from Michigan's two largest energy producers, DTE and Consumers Energy.

Communities across Michigan have opposed data centers, citing energy use by the centers and increasing energy costs to consumers. Currently, Michigan is considering a moratorium on the development of data centers until April 2027, giving local and state entities time to research the subject and to implement planning guidelines.

When asked if she supports the moratorium, Tapper said she supports the need to protect Michigan's water resources and believes local government should have a part in the decision process when data centers build within their community.

Supportive of the moratorium, Shinabarger said data centers have the potential to contaminate the water supply and produce noise pollution. In addition, he said data centers employ a small number of people when built.

The displacement of workers was also a concern for both candidates in regard to AI.

"I'm concerned how it will impact our kids," said Tapper. "I'm also concerned about the future of jobs and replacing those workers."

Shinabarger called the reliance on AI a danger to children because it can cause "cognitive off-loading."

"AI is affecting the way we think," Shinabarger said.

Michigan is facing a critical housing shortage, particularly affecting low- and middle-income families. When asked how they would address the housing shortage in Southwest Michigan, the two candidates agreed that more affordable housing is needed.

Zachary Shinabarger & Kerry Tapper May 2 Event

"I'm disheartened by homelessness numbers of low-income families and vets," Tapper said, citing housing grants that have been blocked by local entities. She supports medium density housing which includes a combination of single-family homes, apartments, and duplex housing.

Shinabarger stated that 12 percent of Van Buren County residents are homeless or at severe risk of homelessness.

"And many of these people have jobs," he added. "There are a lot of empty houses that we could place a vacancy tax on," adding he supports not-for-profit housing developments.

When asked about House Bill 4407, MiCare, which proposes a universal, single-payer healthcare system for Michigan residents, both Shinabarger and Tapper said they support this idea.

"Everyone should be able to go to a doctor without pulling out their wallet," Shinabarger said.

Tapper said she agrees we should be looking at other countries that have managed to develop universal healthcare and work together to find a solution for a more equitable system.

On the topic of education, Tapper said, if elected, she would work to have school funding changed, adding "I believe we can do better."

Shinabarger said local school funding priorities need to focus on education and not so much on building impressive facilities.

Green Party candidate Jared Polonowki introduced himself by stating this is the third time he has sought a political office, having run in 2022 and 2024. He has a bachelor's degree in education and lives in Otsego Township, Allegan County, which is part of the 39th District.

Indivisible Paw Paw's next candidate forum will be at Lucky Wolf at 10 a.m. Saturday, June 6.

The group has invited Democratic and Republican candidates representing Michigan's 20th Senate seat.

# National Travel and Tourism Week celebrated in South Haven

***By James Windel***

May is National Travel and Tourism Week so what better place to hold a statewide press conference celebrating the week than at the Michigan Maritime Museum in South Haven?

Members of the media were invited to join Pure Michigan, the Tourism Industry Coalition of Michigan (TICOM), and regional tourism leaders from across the state for the press conference on May 4, 2026.

Dan McCole, President of TICOM, opened the conference by welcoming attendees in South Haven to recognize National Travel and Tourism Week as the industry heads into the summer season.

"Tourism's importance is not merely symbolic," McCole told the audience in the Museum's conference room, "it impacts economies, communities, employment, and quality of life."

McCole reported that $1.4 trillion was spent in direct U.S. travel and tourism last year, and that Michigan's economic impact came in at around $55 billion. He said that travel is important because it strengthens relationships, exposes people to new ideas, supports personal growth, and improves quality of life.

McCole played a recorded video message from Lt. Governor of Michigan Garlin Gilchrist, who congratulated the industry on National Travel and Tourism Week and 20 years of the Pure Michigan campaign. Gilchrist thanked tourism partners for "telling Michigan's story," bringing visitors from across the country, and helping residents see their own state with new eyes.

Following Gilchrist, Kelly Wolgamott, Vice President of Pure Michigan, reiterated tourism's statewide impact. She pointed out that last year 131 million visitors generated $54.8 billion in total economic impact and supported 350, 000 state and local jobs. Wolgamott noted that the Pure Michigan campaign over the past 20 years has been highly successful. She said that travelers exposed to Pure Michigan ads "do more and stay longer" than those not exposed to the ad. Travelers who have seen the ads, she said, spend on average about $1,800 and visitors generated $171 million in state tax revenue.

Wolgamott concluded her remarks by introducing a new spring campaign launch called "For Every Season of You," which focuses on authentic four-season storytelling that is relatable, nostalgic, emotional, and rooted in warmth and humanity.

"Pure Michigan's influence extends beyond tourism," she said. "It drives local economies, supports jobs, inspires state pride, and sometimes contributes to relocation or business investment."

Jen Sistrunk, the Executive Director of Visit South Haven, also welcomed attendees and shared a short destination video highlighting South Haven's "beach town" identity. She told the audience that South Haven is home to 10 public-access beaches and that it is "An historic resort town where visitors have been coming for over a century."

Sistrunk added that with 1.6 million visitors annually tourism is South Haven's primary economic driver. Tourism in South Haven supports more than 1,600 jobs and generates more than $191 million in annual visitor spending. Sistrunk closed by emphasizing balancing the visitor economy and resident quality of life. "If you build a place where people want to visit, you build a place where people want to live," she said.

Bailey Sisoy-Moore, Executive Director of the Michigan Maritime Museum, was the final speaker and she introduced the museum for those in the audience who were not familiar with the Museum. She described the Museum as a statewide-serving institution on a 5.5-acre campus on the harbor/Black River with seven outbuildings.

"The Museum aims to serve both travelers and school districts across both peninsulas," she said. Sisoy-Moore encouraged guests to connect with the Museum's staff on community involvement opportunities

McCole concluded the press conference by encouraging self-guided exploration of the Museum, which he described as a "beautiful and awesome" building.

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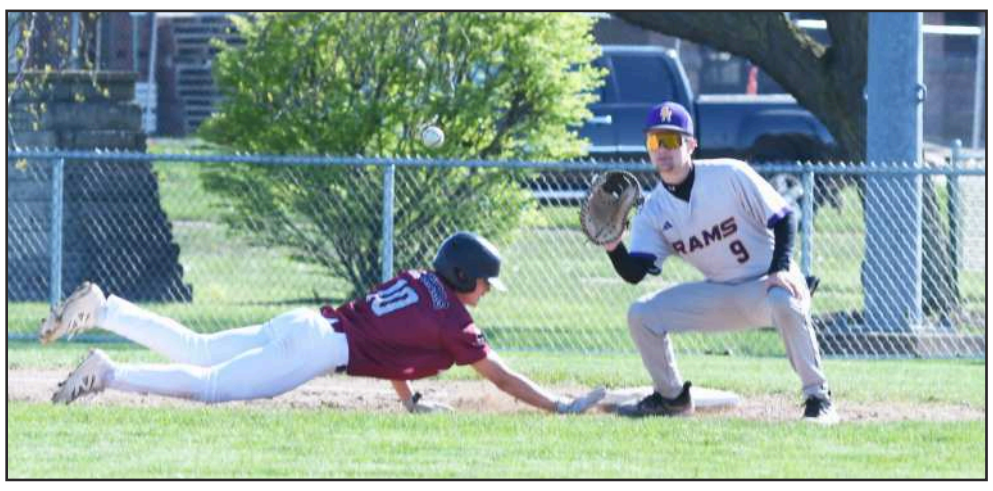
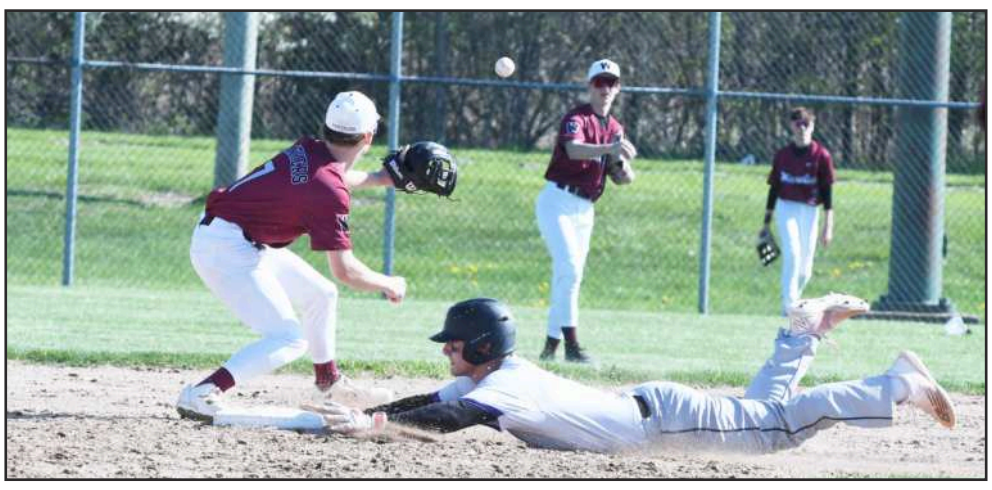
# SH baseball sweeps Hopkins

The South Haven Rams baseball team had mixed results in action this past week. The Rams suffered a pair of shutout defeats to Watervliet (5-0 and 2-0) before sweeping Hopkins (6-3 and 5-1). The Rams are 12-6 on the season. Photos by Tom Renner

South Haven second baseman Grayson Knox waits to put the tag on a sliding Watervliet baserunner.

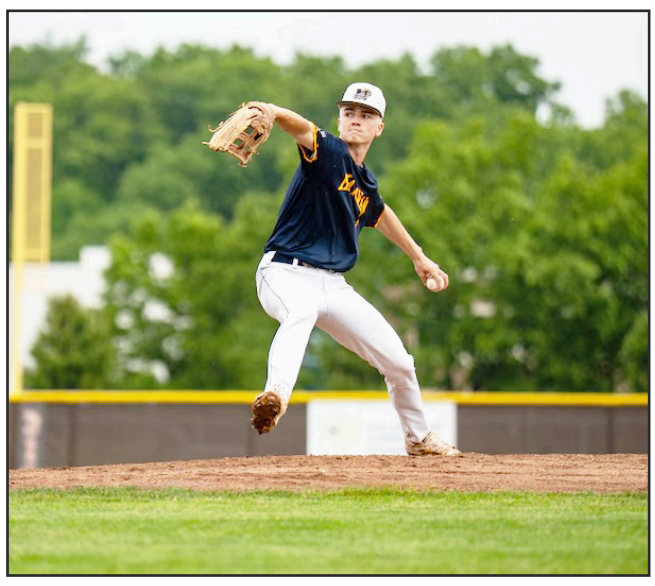


Watervliet baserunner dives safely back into first as South Haven's Charlie Hiatt awaits the pickoff attempt.



South Haven's Jake Bosma slides safely into second base ahead of the throw.

# Mattawan pitcher throws no-hitter



Maxx Vanantwerp

**By John Raffel**
Correspondent

MATTAWAN — Tuesday, April 28, Mattawamn traveled to St Joseph to take on the Bears.

Game 1 saw an amazing pitching performance by Maxx Vanantwerp, throwing a no hitter, 7 innings, 13 K's and only 1 walk, as the Wildcats got the win 8-0.

John Pelak led the offense with 3 hits and 2 RBI, and Ryan Willis added 2 hits as we secured game 1. In game 2 Mattawan got the 9-5 victory. Liam Walsh threw the first 5 innings allowing no runs on 4 hits and striking out 6 Bears. Coleton Strong and Liam Walsh contributed 2 hits apiece.

On Thursday April 6, Mattawan played its first home game of the season against the Lancers of Lakeshore, winning game 1 8-3. Kaden Jominy pitched six innings striking out 10 and walking 3 batters, allowing 2 runs, 1 earned. Ryan Willis and Nolan Jominy had two hits apiece, and Coleton Strong added one hit and two RBI.

In game 2, the bats were alive again as Matawan took a 13-3 win. Patrick Dougherty had 3 hits to lead the offense, with Noaln Jominy and Liam Walsh adding 2 hits apiece. On the rubber Nate Fowler threw 5 innings striking out 7 allowing 3 runs, but 0 earned runs.

Saturday Mattawan traveled to the East side of the state to play Livonia Franklin and Brighton. In game 1 Mattawan fell to Livonia Franklin 2-1. Lucas Koning threw an awesome game, 5.2 innings allowing only 1 run on 4 hits, striking out 2. Offensively the bats went a little cold only mustering 4 hits.

In the second game we redeemed ourselves beating a solid Brighton team 3-2. Maxx Vanantwerp threw the first 3 innings, allowing 1 run on 3 hits, Logan Systma threw a strong 2.2 innings allowing no runs on no hits. Liam Walsh came in to get the save throwing the 7th inning. Nolan Jominy and Coleton Strong led the offense with 2 hits apiece.

Mattawanwent 5-1 on the week.

Upcoming:

" This week is a little lighter week for us" coach Brett Vaughn said. "We play Gull Lake home on Thursday. This is a really big game as it could determine who wins our conference this season. On Saturday we travel to Mason."

# Bangor soccer team tops Our Lady of the Lake

**By John Raffel**
Correspondent

BANGOR — It was another solid performance from the Bangor soccer Lady Vikings as they traveled to Our Lady of the Lake and brought home a 5–0 victory in recent action.

The Vikings came out strong in the first half, taking a 3–0 lead with goals from Isabella Macedo, Cielo Maldonado — scoring her first goal of the season off an assist from Andrea Barajas — and captain Madison Lennox from the penalty spot.

In the second half, the Vikings added two more goals. Isabella Macedo scored her second of the night with an assist from Madgaly Gonzalez, and Samantha Ogrodny finished off the scoring with a great long-range strike.

The defense stood strong all night, keeping the opponents scoreless, while Solexey Calderon had a great performance in goal recording 9 saves.

The Lady Vikings lost to Hartford 301 last night on Monday May 4. The team struggled to find its rhythm throughout the match and ran out of time trying to battle back.

Isabella Macedo scored the only goal for the Vikings, while Solexey Calderon delivered another solid performance in goal with 9 saves.

Next, the Vikings return home to face Comstock on Wednesday May 6 at 6:30 pm.for Senior Night.

The Lady Vikings are now 6–5 overall and 5–1 in conference play.

On April 28, Bangor hosted the Bloomingdale Cardinals in another conference matchup and showed strong chemistry from the opening whistle. The Vikings offense came out firing, scoring seven goals before halftime, while the defense held the Cardinals scoreless in a dominant team performance.

Bangor added one more goal in the second half to finish the match by mercy rule with an 8-0 victory.

Andrea Barajas led the attack with 4 goals and 1 assist. Naraida Sanchez added 2 goals, while Madgaly Gonzalez and Isabela Macedo each scored once.

Samantha Ogrodny contributed 2 assists, and Isabela Macedo also recorded an assist. Goalkeeper Solexey Calderon made 3 saves to help secure the shutout.

# Paw Paw baseball keeps rolling

**By John Raffel**
Correspondent

PAW PAW — Paw Paw Varsity baseball continues its winning ways with a 11-4-1 record.

Paw Paw had a sweep of Sturgis on April 28.

In Game 1 the Red Wolves scored nine in the first and never looked back with an 18-3 victory. Leading the hitting attack was Maverick Johnson and Gavin Alters. Maverick went 3-4 with a double, 3 RBIs, and 2 runs. Gavin went 3-4 with a double and an RBI. Ryan Holmes, Caden Bowen, and Carson DeYoung each had a multi-hit game. Ryan went 2-3 with an RBI, 2 stolen bases, and 3 runs. Caden went 2-for-2 with a walk, 3 RBIs, and 2 runs. Carson went 2-2 with a BB, SB, and 2 ruins. Hayden Criger added a hit with 2 RBIs and a SB. Benny Flanders was 1-3 with 4 RBIs. Carter Buhl added a single and 2 RBIs. Bryn Carlson picked up the victory on the mound pitching a 4 inning complete game, allowed 4 hits, 0 ER, and 4 Ks.

In Game 2 the bats stayed hot with a 15-0 victory behind the arm of Landen Geddes. Landen was dominant on the mound, throwing a complete game shutout in 4 innings, allowing 2 H, 0 ER, and 8 K's. Hayden, Gavin, and Ryan kept the sticks rolling. Hayden went 3-4 with a double, 3 RBI's, and a R. Gavin went 2-3 with a double, RBI, and a run scored. Ryan continued his hot hitting going 2-3 with a BB, 2 RBIs, 2 SB, and 3 R. Maverick added an RBI double. Carter and Benny added singles. Landen helped himself by going 1-1 with 2 walks and an RBI.

On May 1, Paw Paw Varsity baseball win streak extends to eight with a decisive win over state ranked Decatur 19-1. Bats came out on fire with a 15 run first inning. Leading the hitting attack was Landen, Carson, and Maverick. Landen went 3-3 with 2 RBIs and 3 runs scored. Carson went 2-3 with a deep triple, 3 RBIs, and a run scored. Maverick went 2-3 with a double, 2 RBIs, and 2 runs scored. Gavin added a double and 3 RBI's. Benny added a single with 2 RBIs.

Bryn collected a hard hit single with 2 runs scored. Maverick picked up the win on the mound going 3 innings, allowed 1 ER, 3 hits, and 4 Ks. Great TEAM win! The Red Wolves are now 11-4-1.

# Lawton soccer blanks Coloma

**By John Raffel**
Correspondent

LAWTON — Lawton' soccer team delivered a dominant performance Friday night, shutting out Coloma 8-0 to improve to 5-3 on the season.

Junior Lilleonah Mandujano paced the offensive surge with a hat trick, while Senior Maya Tag and Juniors Allyson French and Gabi Mendez each added a goal. Freshmen Joanna Casarrubias and Maddie Vette also found the back of the net, showcasing the Blue Devils' depth across all classes.

Lawton's attack was relentless from the opening whistle, combining sharp passing with sustained pressure that kept Coloma on its heels all night. Contributions came from all over the field, with assists credited to Mandujano, Jaelyn Auton, French, Casarrubias, and Amelia Benavidez.

Defensively, the Blue Devils were just as impressivecoach Abby Burris said. Sophomore goalkeeper Lila Karsen recorded her third shutout of the season behind a steady backline featuring Benavidez, Emily Schubert, Gabby Hayes, and anchored by senior standout Taylor Whipple.

The highlight of the night came on a perfectly executed play between cousins, as Allyson French delivered a precise cross that Maddie Vette finished in stride with an impressive backside volley.

With the win, Lawton closes out its four-game homestand with three victories.

# Lawrence track teams shine

**By John Raffel**
Correspondent

LAWRENCE — The Lawrence girls turned in several strong performances at the SW10 meet in Decatur. Aurora McQueen led the way with wins in both the 1,600 and 3,200, while Kacey Reyes added a win in the 800. The team also picked up key podium finishes from Leslie Patlan in the 400 and Alex Strauch in the long jump.

In the throws, Carolina Mancera placed second in the shot put and first in the discus, with Evelyn Waite taking third in the shot put and Yuridia San Juan-Gonzalez finishing third in the discus.

The girls also recorded a solid group of personal bests, including Alex Strauch (100m, long jump), Lucy Patlan (200m), Leslie Patlan (400m), Kacey Reyes (800m), Fernanda Ibarra-Rodriguez (shot put, discus), and Carolina Mancera (discus).

On the boys side, Lawrence earned multiple top-three finishes across the track and field events. Alexander Gardner won the shot put and placed third in the discus, while Parker Kelson-Johnson finished first in the discus. Mateo Mancera took second in the 800, with Juan Garcia placing third in the 1600 and Robert Palacios taking third in the 3200. Kaiden Blackmoore added a runner-up finish in the 300 hurdles, and Xavier Glover placed third in the 400.

Personal bests on the boys side came from Elijah Kuhens (200m), Christian Barboza-Gutierrez (200m), Walter Waite (long jump), Isaac Keymoole (800m, 1600m), Juan Garcia (1600m), Lorenzo Moreno (1600m), Kaiden Blackmoore (300 hurdles), Parker Kelson-Johnson (discus), and Jake Theragene (long jump).

# South Haven athlete going to Lake Michigan

Wyatt Dotson is a senior on South Haven's baseball team.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

SOUTH HAVEN — Wyatt Dotson is in the middle of his senior baseball season at South Haven but has already decided where he will be taking his talents after high school graduation. Dotson recently signed a letter of intent to play baseball at Lake Michigan College.

"It was my connection to the coaches and knowing my sister is currently a freshman on their softball team," Dotson responded when asked what made him decide on Lake Michigan, "and the community at Lake Michigan College drew me here and knowing I was getting tuition free education for the first two years. And the location brought me there."

It's Dotson third varsity season with South Haven baseball.

"Last year was what stands out the most," Dotson said. "We won conference and went 9-1, and I hit two home runs. The camaraderie we brought to the table was sentimental and it made us stronger."

The year's South Haven team has started out to a 12-5-1 record.

"We had a couple of games in March, which rarely happens but was fun," Dotson said. "We have a lot going for us."

Dotson basically plays center field but he also pitches. His strengths in centerfold "are my ability to read the ball off the bat. I have a strong arm and can fire the ball back to the infield. Being able to read the ball off the bat and having a good arm is a good quality to have."

As a pitcher, his strengths would be "throwing strikes, getting the outs that are needed and forcing groundballs, I use that to my advantage. I have a strong defense and am not afraid to have them hit the ball."

Dotson batted .260 last year. He had a memorable home run against Niles Brandywine as a highlight and many other key hits.

Dotson said he'll let the coaches decide on where he plays at Lake Michigan.

"I'm happy to be part of the squad and am ready to be a Redhawk," he said.

Dotson's goal is for a .300 batting average this season.

Dotson was also a four-year varsity tennis player. He always played doubles

Getting past the regional first round was a top highlight this year.

"I enjoyed it," he said. "It was a sport I never played in my life and I picked it up."

# South Haven softball team sweeps Watervliet

Sofia Grieves was the winning pitcher for South Haven in the second game against Watervliet.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

SOUTH HAVEN — Addison Dekoning struck out 11 batters and led South Haven past Watervliet 4-0 on Tuesday April 28. Dekoning allowed six hits and no runs over seven innings while walking three.

South Haven opened the scoring in the fifth after Reagan Hahn singled home a run in the fifth inning for a 1-0 lead

Hahn drove the middle of the lineup, leading South Haven with three RBIs. The catcher went 2-for-4. Madi Duda led with four walks. South Haven had seven walks for the game. South Haven's defense didn't commit a single error. Hahn had the most chances in the field with 11.

South Haven won the second game 14-0.

Duda had three hits and four RBIs. She had a three-run home run in the third.

Sofia Grieves was the winning pitcher and allowed one hit and no runs over five innings, striking out five and walking none. South Haven had 12 hits with Grieves, Kiersten Chalupa and Lynique Cunningham had multiple hits.

# South Haven tennis team loses

By John Raffel
Correspondent

South Haven lost in girls tennis action on April 30 to Galesburg-Augusta 5-3

Singles

No. 1 - Karlee Nigg, Galesburg-Augusta def. Default Default, South Haven, 0-6 , 0-6.

No. 2 - Lauren Gates, Galesburg-Augusta def. Harley Nail, South Haven, 2-6 , 1-6.

No. 3 - Peyton Newton, Galesburg-Augusta def. Leah Becker, South Haven, 0-6 , 0-6 .

No. 4 - Jilaya Henry-Phillips , Galesburg-Augusta def. Violet Burgoyne, South Haven, 0-6 , 3-6 ,

Doubles

No. 1 - Sarah Diaz-Salinas, South Haven - Maria Booth, South Haven def. Avery Fawcett, Galesburg-Augusta - Emmalee Steinacker, Galesburg-Augusta, 6-3 , 6-0.

No. 2 - Celine Andersen, Galesburg-Augusta - Alexis Hanis, Galesburg-Augusta def. Mireya Arvizu, South Haven - Sheyla Gonzalez, South Haven, 1-6 , 6-1 , 9-11,

No. 3 - Remmi Rigozzi, South Haven - Regan Nail, South Haven def. Luna Gray, Galesburg-Augusta - Miliyah Lock, Galesburg-Augusta, 6-2 , 6-0,

No. 4 - Grace Armendariz, South Haven - Khloi Smith, South Haven def. Default Default, Galesburg-Augusta - Default Default, Galesburg-Augusta, 6-0 , 6-0.

# Bangor baseball falls to 10-9-1

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BANGOR —Bangor's baseball team fell to 10-9-1 with a 7-4 and 9-5 doubleheader loss on Monday to the Hartford Huskies.

In the first game, Terrance Payne pitched five innings in relief for Bangor, allowing four hits and one run and striking out five. Carson Pullins took the loss for Bangor, going wo innings and giving up six runs on five his, striking out two.

Terrance Payne led Bangor with one RBI. Art McCoy had two hits. Jorge Dominguez and Terrance one had multiple hits for Bangor which stole eight bases.

Bangor's defense also had a double play.

In the second game, despite the loss, Jaret McCoy and Sue Remington had two hits apiece for Bangor.

Game one we played good with the exception of the second inning when we gave up 5 runs, dropping the game 7-4. Game 2 was the same thing. "We had a solid game except for the 5th inning when we gave up 5 runs again, losing 9-5. We will host Centreville on Thursday at home," Bangor coach Nick Cox said.

"Saturday we hosted Sturgis, Martin and Ottawa Hills in the Bangor invite. We played Sturgis first and dropped that game 13-4. In the second game we took on Ottawa Hills and won 23-7. Luke Remington, Carson Pullins, Jaret McCoy, Terrance Payne, Nick Hardester and Isaiah Irvine all had multiple hits on the day."

"Thursday night we traveled to Marcellus for a SW10 conference matchup," Cox said. "Game one we made a handful of errors and ended up falling 10-0. Game two we played better in the field but could only muster 4 hits and ended up losing the game 6-1. Luke Remington, Carson Pullins, Jaret McCoy, Jorge Domingues, Brendon Jackson, and Nick Hardester all collected hits. Luke, Carson, and Jaret also had multiple stolen bases each.

# McNair leads South Haven track team

By John Raffel
Correspondent

SOUTH HAVEN — Coach Trevor Smiley's South Haven track team coopted on Friday in the St. Joseph/Benton Harbor Rotary mee.

There were 20 teams from southwest Michigan

Jacie McNair took first place in the discus throw with a throw of

142-4 on the final throw of the event.

Madisyn Lapinski had a top five finish and personal record in the

800 meter run (1/2 mile), with a time of 2:38.90

The boys 4x200 meter team of (so) Ciro Abdul-Haqq, (jr) Jaden Bolhuis

(Bowl-HICE), (fr) Griffin Moore and (jr) Zander Duncan had a top

10 finish with a time of 1:40.80

Boys 200 meters had a top 10 finish and personal best from Ciro Abdul-Haqq

with a time of 23.72.

Carly Crawford in girls shot put threw 26-5 for a top 10 finish at the SJ/BH rotary meet also.

PUBLIC AUCTION

THURSDAY, MAY 14 AT 10AM
LOCATED: 52921 CHAMBERLIN RD, MARCELLUS, MI

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# Memorials replaced at Lake View Cemetery

By James Windell

When Wade Bartholomew was walking through Lake View Cemetery last year, he noticed broken pieces of a birdhouse that had been a memorial at Carl Nelson's gravesite.

Instead of just ignoring the deteriorating memorial, he put out a call to the community on social media for help with repair.

Parks Superintendent, Aaron Priebe, hearing about the memorials that were falling apart after 75 years, sent a crew out to take down the birdhouses. While working on this, the group noticed another birdhouse memorial that was in bad shape, near the grave of Arthur Moore. They removed that one as well.

The culmination of Wade Bartholomew's concern was evident in the cemetery on Thursday, April 23, 2026, when a throng of people gathered for the replacing of the birdhouses.

"I always talk about South Haven being so observant and keeping an eye out for the little things that adds so much to our community," said Mayor Annie Brown after the birdhouses were hoisted into place. "This was just such an amazing, generous idea and I want to thank everyone who made this possible."

Jim Ollgaard, President of the Historical Association of South Haven (HASH), said this was a great day for our cemetery "because it shows we care about our beautiful cemetery." "If you know our town well," Ollgaard remarked, "you know that Larry Retherford might volunteer to build a birdhouse. He made reproductions of the exact birdhouses that were originally made by Carl B. Nelson."

Nelsen was a carpenter and long-time resident of South Haven. The birdhouse at his gravesite was the last carpentry he did before he passed away in 1965. The plaque at the foot of the pole holding the birdhouse says that the birdhouse he built was a gift: "A gift to his friends, the birds."

Local craftsmen, Larry Retherford and Ed Appleyard volunteered to work on reproducing both birdhouses over this past winter.

The second birdhouse was replaced near the gravestone of Arthur D. Moore. Moore was a native of South Haven and was the grandson of J. R. Monroe, who originally platted the land for the town. Moore was a merchant, vice-president of the Bank of South Haven, and a former Mayor, who spent many years working with birding societies, counting and banding various species. His granddaughter was able to attend the short ceremony as the birdhouses were replaced.

Ollgaard also said that The HASH is devoted to seeing to it that Lake View Cemetery is taken care of. "I don't know if you're aware of it," he said, "but this is one of the most beautiful cemeteries in Michigan and perhaps in the United States."

Wade Bartholomew also said that he appreciated everyone's help with the project. "The restoration turned out to be fantastic," he said. "It's just amazing that something several decades old could be put back together and made great again. Hopefully, the birdhouses will last another 50 to 100 years."

# Off the Page features 35 artists

**The Moors by Deborah Correnti, South Haven artist.**

**What was Written, What Remains! Echoes of Grace by Talisha Cannaday, Covert artist.**

SUMmoNiNG
OUr BeTTeR
ANGeLS
THE IDEA OF "BETTER ANGELS" WAS INTRODUCED BY ABRAHAM LINCOLN IN HIS PRE-CIVIL WAR FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS IN 1861.
Lincoln, A. (2014). First inaugural address. In Abraham Lincoln: God's "Instrument" (pp. 51-62). MDFL (Original work published 1861).
We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.

**Summoning Our Better Angels by Kellie Terry, South Haven artist.**

Off the Page is the theme for the 77th Annual Member Exhibition at the South Haven Center for the Arts, opening Friday, May 8 with a reception from 5-7pm. Each spring the South Haven center for the Arts invites members to share artwork of a themed exhibition. This year artists have submitted work in painting, pastel, digital media, fused glass, acrylics, fiber, and more!

Off the Page will feature over 35 artists and nearly 60 pieces of original art work across mediums. In response to this year's theme, many of the artists have created wall-mounted works with elements that emerge from the works surface and works with edges that do not conform to the typical rectangle on the wall, as well as flat work that ponder the theme.

"The member exhibition is such a unique exhibition that as a viewer, it's really interesting to see how the artist will interpret the theme each year," says Jenna Myny, Center for the Arts Administrator. "The theme this year kind of stumped some artists, but now the pieces being brought in by the artist and it's all really beautiful work, as usual! Many pieces have drawn inspiration from books, stories and magazines. It's always a joy seeing an exhibition come together, and this one is no exception."

Among the artists featured in this exhibition are several artists joining the member exhibition for the first time. Included will be Talisha Cannaday with her oil and mixed media piece, What was Written, What Remains! Echoes of Grace, of which the artist writes "music has the power to take the mind anywhere it wants to go. What begins with lyrics on a page can move off the page and into imagination and space!" Deborah Correnti a South Haven artist, will be exhibiting two paintings inspired by the writing of Emily Brontë and Emily Dickinson while South Haven artists Taylor Joachim brings hyperbolic geometry off the page through two hyperbolic crochet pieces and Kellie Terry is inspired by the words of Abraham Lincoln.

Community members will have the opportunity to talk to artist about their works at the opening reception which will also include hors devours and wine. Most art works are for sale and the purchase of art supports both local artists and the South Haven Center for the Arts.

Hours are Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, 11am–4pm, and Thursday, 11am–6pm

For more information visit southhavenarts.org or southhavenarts on Facebook and instagram. To contact the Center directly, email info@southhavenarts.org or call (269) 637-1041.

# Area Church Services

## PAW PAW

**ALMENA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**
27503 CR 375
Pastor Dan Phillips
668-2811
www.almenaumc.com
SUNDAY Worship - 11 a.m.
(Childcare Provided)
FRIDAY: AA- 8 p.m.

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**COVEY HILL BAPTIST CHURCH**
33566 28th Avenue
(corner of 28th & M-40)
269-628-2139
www.coveyhill.org
Pastor Daniel Wilson
SUNDAY Worship 10:45am
Nursery & Children's Church provided
Messages available on YouTube

• • • •

**FAITH OF THE APOSTLES CURCH**
34580 M-40 Highway
Elder David Harn
1 (269) 512-4586
SUNDAY
Christian Education - 10 a.m.
Wroship Service - 11:30 a.m.
WEDNESDAY • Bible Study - 7 p.m.

• • • •

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**
32464 Red Arrow
Pastor Horace M. "Buddy" Turner... 657-2090
SUNDAY Worship - 11 a.m.
on Facebook: www.Facebook.com/buddyturner2 or search: "Buddy Turner"

• • • •

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**
120 Pine St, Paw Paw
Worship: 10am every Sunday in person or online at - www.pawpawpres.com or www.youtube.com/@1stpre-spawpaw

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**NEW HOPE FAMILY**
201 W. Michigan Avenue
Pastor Dan Webb
www.newhopefellowship.org
SUNDAY Morning Worship - 10 a.m.

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**PAW PAW SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CURCH**
60409 South M-40
Pastor Sean Reed
Lawn Services - 10am & 11am
www.pawpaw.church
Online worship services on Facebook & YourTube

• • • •

**PAW PAW UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**
420 W. Michigan Ave., Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-657-7727
Pastor Dan Phillips
Sunday Service at 9:30 am

• • • •

**RED ARROW MINISTRIES**
31133 Red Arrow Highway
Rev. G. Ben Bowater, IV
Founding Pastor
SUNDAY Worship - 9:30 a.m. & 11 a.m.
www.redarrowministries.org for live stream worship

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**ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**
412 Cedar Street
Handicap Accessible
657-3762 • www.stmarkpaw-paw.com
e-mail: stmarkspawpaw@gmail.com
SUNDAY Worship 9:30 a.m.

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**ST. MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**
500 Paw Paw Street
Fr. Dave Pinto
657-4459
Weekday:
Monday – no Mass
Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday: 8:00 AM
Wednesday Mass – 9:00 AM
Saturday – 4:00 PM
Sunday – 11:00 AM

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**TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL**
721 Pine Street
Church: 657-4840
School: 657-5921
Sunday Services 9 a.m. & 11 a.m.

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**TRUTH CHURCH**
32560 56th Ave. • 657-5042
www.truthchurchpawpaw.com
Pastor Steven Green
SUNDAY
School - 10 a.m.
Evening Service - 6 p.m.
THURSDAY Bible Study - 7 p.m.

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**IGLESIA DEL ESPÍRITU SANTO/ CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**
30037 E Red Arrow Hwy.,
Pastors Maggie & Jay Salas
Domingo/Sunday:
Adoración | Worship- 10 a.m.
Jueves/Thursday: Oracion/ Estudió Bíblico | Prayer/Bible Study- 7 p.m.
(269) 377-6514
(269) 993-6727

## LAWRENCE

**UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**
Corner of Exchange & James Street • 674-8381
Pastor Doug Tipken
SUNDAY Worship - 11 a.m.
lawrencemethodist-church.org for information of online videos

## GOBLES

**NORTHPOINT MINISTRIES OF GOBLES**
04077 M40
269-628-9199
northpointgobles@gmail.com
Pastors: Gary Lounsberry & John Losen Jr.
Sunday: 11am - Morning Worship
Monday: 7 pm - REFRESH Bible Study
Wednesday: 7pm - Prayer Meeting

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**ST JUDE' MISSION PARISH**
13809 M-40
269-628-2219
Thursday – 10:00 AM
Sunday – 9:00 AM

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**GOBLES UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**
210 E. Exchange St., Gobles
(269) 628-2263
Pastor Sheila F. Baker
Sunday: 9:30 a.m. Worship
Children's Sunday School
Website: goblesumc.com
Facebook.com/goblesumc

## MARCELLUS

**ST. MARGARET MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH**
296 E. Dibble St.
Rev. John Tran.
668-3312
Sunday - 9:45AM

• • • •

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88067 C.R. 652 (In the SW corner of Porter Twp.)
Rev. Ron Packer
269-548-7348
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For mor information or directions call: Neal Ferguson: 269-624-6837 or Ann Nesbitt: 269-624-6781

## DECATUR

**DECATUR BIBLE CHURCH**
80797 M-51, Decatur
(269) 423-5111
Pastor Steven Pace
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Worship 11:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study & Prayer 5:00 p.m.
facebook.com/Decatur-BibleChurch • http://www.decaturbible.org

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**DECATUR NEW HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH**
319 ½ West Delaware Street
Pastor Ross Tarantino
SUNDAY
Worship Service-10:00 a.m.
TUESDAY
Bible Study-1:00 p.m.
269-423-8136
info@decaturnewhopecommunity.net

## LAWTON

**DAILY HARVEST MINISTRIES**
117 S.Franklin Street
Pastor Jack Shanley
SUNDAY Worship - 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
WEDNESDAY
Bible Study - 6 p.m.

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**IGLESIA PENTECOSTES**
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Bilingual
117 S. Franklin Street
Pastors Arturo & Lourdez Hernandez
(616) 656-0137
SERVICES
Domingo - 9:30 a.m.
Martes y Jueves - 7:30 p.m.
Local: (269) 655-8071

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**LAWTON EVANGELICAL CHURCH**
425 S. Nursery Street, Lawton • 624-1524
Call if you need help in some way
www.lawtonevan.com
SUNDAY Worship Services - 10 a.m.
We offer Nursery and Children's Church

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**NEW COMMUNITY CHURCH**
502 N. Main Street, Lawton, MI 49065
Pastor Adam Potgiesser
Sunday Worship 10am
www.nc2online.com • face-book.com/nc2online
(269) 299-2003

• • • •

**ST. PAUL'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**
624-1050
Pastor Ashlei Horn
SUNDAY Worship - 10:00 a.m.
www.stpoulsumclawton.com or on Facebook www.Facebook.com/Lawton-St-Pauls-UMC

## MATTAWAN

**CALVARY COMMUNITY CHURCH**
7829 S. 5th St
Pastor Gregory VanHeukelom
375-6240
www.calvaryreformed.org
Website: https://www.calva-ry-community.church/
Worship still 10 am Sunday with live Facebook
Jody's Closet, a free clothing ministry is open Mon/Tue 10am-12 and Thur 6-7:30pm
And the 1st Saturday of the month 8:30-10am.

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**FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH**
56070 Murray Street
Pastor Chuck Rawsthorne
SUNDAY
School - 9:30 a.m.
Morning Service - 10:30 a.m.
(In person and on Facebook)

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**MATTAWAN COMMUNITY CHURCH**
23680 Front Ave.
668-3263
www.mattawancc.com
mattawancommunitychurch@gmail.com
Pastor Eric Baird
Sundays at 10:25 a.m

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**ST. JOHN BOSCO CATHOLIC CHURCH**
23830 Front Ave.
Rev. John Tran
668-3312
www.stjbparish.com
Sunday Mass times to 8:00 AM & 11:30 AM Saturday Vigil 4:00PM

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# =• PUBLIC NOTICE •=

**STATE OF MICHIGAN**
**COUNTY OF VAN BUREN**
**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**
**Decedent's Estate**
Case No. 2026 1049 DE
Judge Hon. Susan Metzger
P62867
Estate of **JANET ADELE LOWMAN,** decedent
Date of birth: 1/15/1960
**TO ALL CREDITORS:**
**NOTICE TO CREDITORS:**
The decedent, Janet A. Lowman, died 2/17/2016.
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Brian R. Champion, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 212 E. Paw Paw St., SUITE #220, Paw Paw, MI 49079 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
Date: 4/14/2026

**Attorney:**

**Personal Representative:**
Brian R. Champion
13043 31st st
Gobles MI 49079
269-547-3733

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STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
COUNTY OF VAN BUREN
**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**
**Decedent's Trust Estate**
Decedent: **KATHALEEN R. YANCEY**
Date of Birth: 8/21/1938
**TO ALL CREDITORS: ***
**NOTICE TO CREDITORS:**
The decedent, KATHALEEN R. YANCEY , who lived at 606 E 2nd Lawton , Michigan 49065 died 12/14/2025. There is no probate estate.
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against KATHALEEN R. YANCEY or THE KATHALEEN R. YANCEY REVOCABLE TRUST dated November 27, 2002, as amended and restated in total on September 14, 2009, and any amendments thereto, will be forever barred unless presented to Calvin J. Bradshaw and Connie R. Pond the named successor co-trustees within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
**4/15/2026**

**Attorney name:**
William B, Millard P39054
DeMent and Marquardt, P.L.C.
211 East Water Street, Suite 401
Kalamazoo, MI 49007
(269) 343-2106

**Co-Trustee**
Calvin J. Bradshaw
29328 CR 354
Lawton, MI 49065
(269) 779-1528

**Co-Trustee**
Connie R. Pond
63646 CR 665
Paw Paw, MI 49079
(269) 655-5054

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**STATE OF MICHIGAN**
**COUNTY OF VAN BUREN**
**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**
**Decedent's Estate**
Case No. 2026 1058 DE
Judge Hon. Susan Metzger
Estate of **MELVIN ARTHUR SMALLEY,** decedent
**TO ALL CREDITORS:**
**NOTICE TO CREDITORS:**
The decedent, Melvin Arthur Smalley, died November 13,2025.
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Jeffrey A Smalley, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 212 E. Paw Paw St., SUITE #220, Paw Paw, MI 49079 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
Date: April 30, 2026

**Attorney:**
Willis Law
Davis C. Martin P#84717
491 W. South St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49007
(269) 492-1040

**Personal Representative:**
Jeffrey A. Smalley
2655 37th Street
Gobles, MI 49055
269-303-8272

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**STATE OF MICHIGAN**
**COUNTY OF VAN BUREN**
**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**
**Decedent's Estate**
Case No. 2026 1071 DE
Judge Hon. Susan Metzger
Estate of **ULRICH J. CLAASSEN,** decedent
**TO ALL CREDITORS:**
**NOTICE TO CREDITORS:**
The decedent, Ulrich J. Claassen, died March 15,2026.
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Janice Claassen, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 212 E. Paw Paw St., SUITE #220, Paw Paw, MI 49079 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
Date: April 29, 2026

**Attorney:**
Schuitmaker Moraitis Law Office, P.C.
Christopher N. Moraitis P#87052
181 West Michigan Ave., Ste. 1, P.O.Box 520
Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-657-3177

**Personal Representative:**
Janice Claassen
323 E. First Street
Lawton, MI 49065
269-350-0285

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**STATE OF MICHIGAN**
**COUNTY OF VAN BUREN**
**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**
**Decedent's Estate**
Case No. 2026 1075 DE
Judge Hon. Susan Metzger
Estate of **VIRGIL ROY JOHNSON,** decedent
**TO ALL CREDITORS:**
**NOTICE TO CREDITORS:**
The decedent, Virgil Roy Johnson, died February 24, 2026..
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Steven Shaw, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 212 E. Paw Paw St., SUITE #220, Paw Paw, MI 49079 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
Date: April 29, 2026

**Attorney:**
Schuitmaker Moraitis Law Office, P.C.
Christopher N. Moraitis P#87052
181 West Michigan Ave., Ste. 1, P.O. Box 520
Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-657-3177

**Personal Representative:**
Steven Shaw
17 Glenview Drive
Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-377-5915

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**STATE OF MICHIGAN**
**COUNTY OF VAN BUREN**
**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**
**Decedent's Estate**
Case No. 2026 1074 DE
Judge Hon. Susan Metzger
Estate of **BARBARA A. PERCIVAL,** decedent
**TO ALL CREDITORS:**
**NOTICE TO CREDITORS:**
The decedent, Barbara A. Percival, died May 30,2025.
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Karen M Percival, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 212 E. Paw Paw St., SUITE #220, Paw Paw, MI 49079 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
Date: April 30, 2026

**Attorney:**
Schuitmaker Moraitis Law Office, P.C.
Christopher N. Moraitis P#87052
181 West Michigan Ave., Ste. 1, P.O.Box 520
Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-657-3177

**Personal Representative:**
Karen M. Percival
7671 38th 1/2 Street
Bloomingdale, MI 49026
269-650-6044

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**STATE OF MICHIGAN**
**COUNTY OF VAN BUREN**
**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**
**Decedent's Estate**
Case No. 2026 1067 DE
Estate of **SHIRLEY M. RUSIN,** decedent
Date of Birth: 12/31/1933
**TO ALL CREDITORS:**
**NOTICE TO CREDITORS:**
The decedent, Shirley M. Rusin, died 02/24/2026.
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Richard E. Rusin, Jr., personal representative, or to both the probate court at 212 E. Paw Paw St., SUITE #220, Paw Paw, MI 49079 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
Date: 05/01/2026

**Attorney:**
Andrew W. Barnes #P70571
317 Center Street
South Haven, MI 49090
269-287-2010

**Personal Representative:**
Richard E. Rusin, Jr.
8020 S. Rainbow Blvd. #100-427
Las Vegas, NV 89139
202-683-8453

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**STATE OF MICHIGAN**
**COUNTY OF VAN BUREN**
**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**
**Decedent's Estate**
Case No. 2026 1041 DE
Judge Hon. Susan Metzger
Estate of **DAVID ANTHONY HUDSON,** decedent
Date of Birth: December 7,1937
**TO ALL CREDITORS:**
**NOTICE TO CREDITORS:**
The decedent, David Anthony Hudson, died October 11,2025.
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Lottie D. Hudson-Walton and Toni Elzia, co-personal representative, or to both the probate court at 212 E. Paw Paw St., SUITE #220, Paw Paw, MI 49079 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
Date: 05/08/2026

**Attorney:**
Thav, Ryke & Associates
Marangelis Rosado
P#88479 24725 W. 12 Mile Road
Suite 110
Southfield, MI 48034
248-945-1111

**Co-Personal Representative:**
Lottie D. Hudson-Walton
608 E. 83rd PL.
Chicago, IL 60619
773-852-9381

**Attorney:**
Gyimah Law, P.L.C.
Ama G. Gyimah P#88423
251 N. Rose St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49007
239-919-0705

**Co-Personal Representative:**
Toni Elzia
1349 Jeffery Dr.
Homewood, IL 60430
708-957-7763

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**STATE OF MICHIGAN**
**COUNTY OF VAN BUREN**
**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**
**Decedent's Estate**
Case No. 2026 1048 DE
Estate of **SANDRA N. WILCOX,** decedent
Date of Birth: 07/26/1969
**TO ALL CREDITORS:**
**NOTICE TO CREDITORS:**
The decedent, Sandra N. Wilcox, died 12/28/2025.
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to John M. Guinan, counsel for, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 212 E. Paw Paw St., SUITE #220, Paw Paw, MI 49079 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
Date: 05/08/2026

**Attorney:**
John M. Guinan #P64747
12 Washington Ave. Suite 250
Grand Haven, MI 49417
616-847-1234

**Personal Representative:**
Daniel K. Uchytil
47714 Doris Dr.
Oklahoma City, OK 73162
385-335-1196

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**STATE OF MICHIGAN**
**COUNTY OF VAN BUREN**
**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**
**Decedent's Estate**
Case No. 2026 1066 DE
Estate of **ELLEN J. MILLER,** decedent
Date of Birth: 08/14/1942
**TO ALL CREDITORS:**
**NOTICE TO CREDITORS:**
The decedent, _Ellen J. Miller, died 02/20/2026.
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to John R. Peyton, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 212 E. Paw Paw St., SUITE #220, Paw Paw, MI 49079 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
Date: 4/27/2026

**Attorney:**
Andrew W. Barnes #P70571
317 Center Street
South Haven, MI 49090
269-287-2010

**Personal Representative:**
John R. Peyton
1212 N. Lapham St.
Oconomowoc, WI 53066
262-370-8110

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**County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Lisa Hoag; Atty: Team H; 1st Pub: 5/7/2026; Atty File #: 511869F05; Insurer: (unknown)**
**Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement**
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on June 11, 2026.
The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property.
A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Lisa Hoag, a single woman
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): PennyMac Loan Services LLC
Date of Mortgage: March 29, 2019
Date of Mortgage Recording: April 4, 2019
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $95,388.15
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Almena, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: THE SOUTH 160 FEET OF THE WEST 680.6 FEET OF THE NORTH 1/2 OF THE SOUTHWEST FRACTIONAL 1/4 OF SECTION 7, TOWN 2 SOUTH, RANGE 13 WEST, ACCORDING TO THE GOVERNMENT SURVEY THEREOF.
Common street address (if any): 30777 M 40, Paw Paw, MI 49079-8520
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: May 7, 2026
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1592703

**(05-07)(05-28)**

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**County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Steven Koenig; Atty: Team X; 1st Pub: 5/7/2026; Atty File #: 529469F01; Insurer: (unknown)**
Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on June 4, 2026.
The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Steven P. Koenig, aka Steven Koenig, a single man
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, as Trustee for the benefit of the Freddie Mac Seasoned Credit Risk Transfer Trust, Series 2021-3
Date of Mortgage: June 1, 2004
Date of Mortgage Recording: June 9, 2004
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $13,604.33
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Porter, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: Commencing at a point found by starting at the Northwest corner of Section 28, Town 4 South, Range 13 West, thence Easterly on the Section line 99 rods, thence South parallel with the West line of said Section 2814 feet, thence South 33 degrees 48 minutes West 356 feet to the point of beginning of this description, thence continuing South 33 degrees 48 minutes West 60 feet, thence South 52 degrees 0 minutes East to Cedar Lake, thence Northeasterly along said Lake to a point which is South 51 degrees 52 minutes East from said point of beginning, thence North 51 degrees 52 minutes West to said point of beginning. Also, a non-exclusive easement for ingress and egress in common with others beginning at a point found by commencing at the Northwest corner of Section 28, Town 4 South, Range 13 West; thence Easter on the North line of said Section, 99 rods; thence South parallel with the West line of said Section, 2814 feet to the point of beginning of this description; thence South 33 degrees 48 minutes West 536 feet; thence North 52 degrees 34 minutes West 33.07 feet; thence North 33 degrees 48 minutes East 464.57 feet; thence North parallel with the West line of said Section to the centerline of Shaw Road; thence Easterly along said centerline to a point 99 rods Easterly on the West line of said Section 28; thence South to said point of beginning.
Common street address (if any): 29383 Shaw Rd, Lawton, MI 49065-9449
The redemption period shall be 1 year from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: May 7, 2026
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1592416

**(05-07)(05-28)**

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**Correction to Pub -> County: Van Buren; Mtgr: LARRY J SMITH; Atty: ROBERTSON ANSCHUTZ SCHNEID CRANE - RAS CRANE & PARTNERS (CC ON FILE); 1st Pub: 5/7/2026; Atty File #: 26-387556; Insurer: (unknown)**
**ROBERTSON, ANSCHUTZ, SCHNEID, CRANE & PARTNERS, PLLC, MAY BE DEEMED A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION WE OBTAIN WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. PLEASE CONTACT OUR OFFICE AT 13010 Morris Road, Suite 450, Alpharetta, GA 30004 ph:470-321-7112**
**Attention homeowner:** If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in VAN BUREN County, starting promptly at 1:00 P.M on June 4, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): LARRY J SMITH AND JACQUELINE SMITH.
Default has been made in the conditions of a Mortgage made by LARRY J. SMITH AND JACQUELINE SMITH to FIRST FRANKLIN A DIVISION OF NAT. CITY BANK OF IN, original Mortgagee, for a mortgage dated March 09, 2005, and recorded on March 24, 2005, in Liber 1434 Page 142 in the Van Buren County Register of Deeds.
Said mortgage was assigned by said Mortgagee to WELLS FARGO BANK, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, AS TRUSTEE FOR FIRST FRANKLIN MORTGAGE LOAN TRUST, MORTGAGE LOAN ASSET-BACKED CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2005-FF6, as documented by an assignment dated March 17, 2026, and recorded on March 30, 2026, in Liber 1790 Page 481 in the VAN BUREN County Register of Deeds, on which Mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of $58,549.01. Under the power of sale contained in said Mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said Mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue, at the place of holding the Circuit Court within VAN BUREN County, Michigan on June 4, 2026 at 1:00 P.M Said premises are located in the city of BLOOMINGDALE in VAN BUREN County, Michigan and are described as: THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED PREMISES SITUATED IN THE TOWNSHIP OF BLOOMINGDALE, VAN BUREN COUNTY, AND THE STATE OF MICHIGAN: BEGINNING AT THE WEST QUARTER POST OF SECTION 7, T1S, R14W, THENCE SOUTH 89°43'57" EAST ON THE EAST AND WEST QUARTER LINE, 300.00 FEET, THENCE SOUTH PARALLEL WITH THE WEST SECTION LINE, 132.00 FEET; THENCE NORTH 89°43'57" WEST 300.00 FEET TO THE WEST SECTION LINE; THENCE NORTH ON SAME 132.00 FEET TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING. Property Address: 5967 46TH ST., BLOOMINGDALE, MI 49026 Tax ID No. 80-05-007-010-20 The redemption period shall be Six (6) months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. If this property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the Mortgage sale or to the Mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. WELLS FARGO BANK, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, AS TRUSTEE FOR FIRST FRANKLIN MORTGAGE LOAN TRUST, MORTGAGE LOAN ASSET-BACKED CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2005-FF6, Mortgagee/Assignee May 7, 2026 ROBERTSON, ANSCHUTZ, SCHNEID, CRANE & PARTNERS, PLLC Attorney for Mortgagee/ Assignee 13010 Morris Road, Suite 450 Alpharetta, GA 30004 Telephone: 470-321-7112 Facsimile: 404-393-1425 Service Email: MIFCLTeam@raslg.com

**(05-07)(05-28)**

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**County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Lonnie Trulove Jr; Atty: Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C. - Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C.; 1st Pub: 4/30/2026; Atty File #: 23MI00162-3; Insurer: (unknown)**
**FORECLOSURE NOTICE**
**Attention homeowner:** If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
**NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT.** Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 01:00 PM, May 28, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Default has been made in the conditions of a certain mortgage made by Lonnie Trulove Jr, a married man to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as Mortgagee, as Nominee for Amerifirst Financial Corporation, its successors, and assigns, Mortgagee, dated January 22, 2015, and recorded on January 27, 2015, in Liber 1613, Page 810, Van Buren County Records, said mortgage was assigned to Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC by an Assignment of Mortgage dated July 31, 2025 and recorded July 31, 2025 in Liber 1781, Page 796, on which mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of Seventy-Four Thousand Eight Hundred Fifty-Six and 59/100 ($74,856.59) including interest at the rate of 4.50000% per annum. Said premises are situated in the Township of Hartford, Van Buren County, Michigan, and are described as: That part of the Southeast quarter of Section 28, Town 3 South, Range 16 West, described as follows: Beginning on the East and West quarter line of said Section 28 at a point 1044.56 feet West of the East quarter post of said Section 28, thence West on said quarter line, 273.00 feet to the West line of the East half of the Southeast quarter, thence South 00 degrees 42 minutes 45 seconds East on said West line, 340.00 feet, thence East 273.00 feet, thence North 00 degrees 42 minutes 45 seconds West, 340.00 feet to the place of beginning. Commonly known as: 64469 66TH AVE, HARTFORD, MI 49057 If the property is eventually sold at foreclosure sale, the redemption period will be 6.00 months from the date of sale unless the property is abandoned or used for agricultural purposes. If the property is determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241 and/or 600.3241a, the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of sale, or 15 days after statutory notice, whichever is later. If the property is presumed to be used for agricultural purposes prior to the date of the foreclosure sale pursuant to MCL 600.3240, the redemption period is 1 year. Pursuant to MCL 600.3278, if the property is sold at a foreclosure sale, the borrower(s) will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. TO ALL PURCHASERS: The foreclosing mortgagee can rescind the sale. In that event, your damages are, if any, limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest. Dated: April 30, 2026 Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C. Attorneys for Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC 43252 Woodward Avenue, Suite 180, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302, (248) 335-9200 Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Case No. 23MI00162-3

**(04-30)(05-21)**

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**County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Patrick Gillette; Atty: ANDREW BARNES - ANDREW BARNES; 1st Pub: 4/23/2026; Atty File #: (N/A); Insurer: (unknown)**
**NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT** Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following Mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 p.m., on May 21, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
THIS FIRM IS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT, ANY INFORMATION WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. PLEASE CONTACT OUR OFFICE AT THE NUMBER BELOW IF YOU ARE IN ACTIVE MILITARY DUTY.
Default has occurred in the conditions of a Mortgage (the "Mortgage") made by PATRICK GILLETTE, a single man, as Mortgagor(s), to Horizon Bank. The Mortgage is dated June 2, 2010 and was recorded June 11, 2010 at Liber 1536, Page 318 of Van Buren County Records. The amount claimed to be due on said Mortgage and unpaid at the date of this Notice is FIFTY-THREE THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED FIFTY-EIGHT AND 45/100 ($53,158.45) DOLLARS, including interest on the applicable indebtedness at a variable rate which is currently 5.00% per annum. This sum will increase as additional interest, costs, expenses, and attorney fees accrue under the Mortgage and its related note and which are permitted under Michigan law after the date of this Notice. No legal or equitable proceedings have been instituted to recover the debt secured by the Mortgage, and the power of sale in the Mortgage has become operative by reason of the default. At the date and time as referenced previously in this Notice, the Mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the property herein described, or some part of them, at public auction, to the highest bidder, for the purpose of satisfying the amount due and unpaid on the Mortgage, along with interest due, the legal costs and charges of sale as allowed by statute and/or the Mortgage, and any taxes and insurance that the Mortgagee pays on or prior to the date of said sale. The property mentioned and described in the Mortgage, as located in the Township of Decatur, County of Van Buren, and State of Michigan, are more particularly described as follows: Commencing on the West line of Section 4, Town 4 South, Range 14 West, at a point where the centerline of the drainage ditch intersects said West Section line; thence South along said West Section line 200 feet; thence East at right angles to said West Section line 400 feet; thence North parallel with said West Section line to the center of said drainage ditch; thence Southwesterly along the centerline of said drainage ditch to the place of beginning; Address: 73131 42nd St., Decatur, MI 49045; Tax Parcel Nos.: 80-08-004-006-10 & 80-08-004-006-20; together with all existing or subsequently erected or affixed buildings, mobile/manufactured home or homes, improvements, and fixtures; all easements, rights of way, streets, roads, alleys, and public places, privileges, and appurtenances, public or private, now or later used in connection with the premises; and all rights to make divisions of the land that are exempt from the platting requirements of all applicable land division or

***Continues on page B5***

# =• PUBLIC NOTICE •=

*Continues from page B4*

platting acts, as amended from time to time. Attention Purchasers: the foreclosing Mortgagee reserves the right to cancel the sale prior to sale or to rescind this sale at any time. In that event, your damages, if any, will be limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at the sale, plus interest. If the mortgaged property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention Homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. The length of the redemption period will be one (6) six months from date of sale, unless the redemption period is shortened pursuant to MCL 600.3241a or MCL 600.3238, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of sale or as otherwise provided by statute. DATED: April 23, 2026 ANDREW W. BARNES (P70571) BUTZEL LONG P.C. ATTORNEYS FOR HORIZON BANK 317 Center Street South Haven, MI 49090 269-287-2010

**(04-23)(05-14)**

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**County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Chad Pickett; Atty: Schneiderman & Sherman, P.C. - Schneiderman & Sherman, PC; 1st Pub: 4/23/2026; Atty File #: 26-001137-1; Insurer: FNMA**
**SHORT FORECLOSURE NOTICE - VAN BUREN COUNTY Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement.** Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on May 28, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. MORTGAGE: Mortgagor(s): Chad Pickett and Elizabeth Pickett, a husband and wife Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. ("MERS"), as mortgagee, for lender and lender`s successors and assigns Date of mortgage: November 1, 2024 Recorded on November 13, 2024, Liber 1772, on Page 109, Foreclosing Assignee (if any): The Huntington National Bank Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: Two Hundred Four Thousand Four Hundred Forty-Nine and 03/100 Dollars ($204,449.03) Mortgaged premises: Situated in Van Buren County, and described as: The East 28 rods of the West 53 rods of the Southeast Quarter of Section 34, Town 1 South, Range 14 West, according to the Government Survey thereof Commonly known as 38724 24th Ave, Gobles, MI 49055 The redemption period will be 6 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 600.3241a(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. If the above referenced property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of Act 236 of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. The Huntington National Bank Mortgagee/ Assignee Schneiderman & Sherman P.C. 23938 Research Dr, Suite 300 Farmington Hills, MI 48335 248.539.7400 1591287

**(04-23)(05-14)**

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**County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Megan McLeod; Atty: Schneiderman & Sherman, P.C. - Schneiderman & Sherman, PC; 1st Pub: 4/23/2026; Atty File #: 26-000887-1; Insurer: (unknown)**
**SHORT FORECLOSURE NOTICE - VAN BUREN COUNTY Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement.** Notice is given under section 49c of the State Housing Development Authority Act of 1966, 1966 PA 346, MCL 125.1449c, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on May 21, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. MORTGAGE: Mortgagor(s): Megan McLeod and Sean McDaniel, all as tenants in common Original Mortgagee: Neighborhood Loans, Inc. Date of mortgage: May 30, 2023 Recorded on July 3, 2023, Liber 1754, on Page 454, and re-recorded via Loan Modification recorded on May 30, 2025 in Liber 1779, on Page 490 Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Michigan State Housing Development Authority Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: Two Hundred Twenty-Three Thousand Six Hundred Fifteen and 91/100 Dollars ($223,615.91) Mortgaged premises: Situated in Van Buren County, and described as: Commencing in the center of M-43 highway at a point South 45 degrees 21.5 minutes East 159 feet from the center of Section 24, Town 1 South, Range 17 West; thence South 45 degrees 18.5 minutes West 547.97 feet South parallel with the North and South 1/4 line 117.94 feet; thence North 45 degrees 18.5 minutes East 631.89 feet to center of M-43 highway; thence North 45 degrees 21.5 minutes West along center line 83.85 feet to point of beginning. Commonly known as 70907 M 43, South Haven, MI 49090 The redemption period will be 6 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 125.1449v, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 125.1449v(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Michigan State Housing Development Authority Mortgagee/Assignee Schneiderman & Sherman P.C. 23938 Research Dr, Suite 300 Farmington Hills, MI 48335 248.539.7400 1591286

**(04-23)(05-14)**

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**County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Gary L Verstrate; Atty: Schneiderman & Sherman, P.C. - Schneiderman & Sherman, PC; 1st Pub: 4/16/2026; Atty File #: 26-000977-1; Insurer: (unknown)**
**SHORT FORECLOSURE NOTICE - VAN BUREN COUNTY Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement.** Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on June 04, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. MORTGAGE: Mortgagor(s): Gary L. Verstrate and Linda F. Verstrate, husband and wife Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. ("MERS"), as mortgagee, for lender and lender`s successors and assigns Date of mortgage: May 8, 2018 Recorded on May 18, 2018, Liber 1668, on Page 815, Foreclosing Assignee (if any): loanDepot.com, LLC Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: One Hundred Four Thousand One Hundred Twenty-Two and 88/100 Dollars ($104,122.88) Mortgaged premises: Situated in Van Buren County, and described as: THE WEST SEVEN AND ONE-HALF (7 1/2) ACRES OF THE NORTH FORTY-SEVEN AND ONE-HALF (47 1/2) ACRES OF THE NORTHEAST FRACTIONAL QUARTER (1/4) OF SECTION 5 (5), TOWN TWO (2) SOUTH, RANGE FIFTEEN (15) WEST. Commonly known as 54961 24th Ave, Bangor, MI 49013 The redemption period will be 6 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 600.3241a(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. If the above referenced property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of Act 236 of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. loanDepot.com, LLC Mortgagee/Assignee Schneiderman & Sherman P.C. 23938 Research Dr, Suite 300 Farmington Hills, MI 48335 248.539.7400 1590678

**(04-16)(05-07)**

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APC Towers, LLC is proposing to construct a 199-foot tall (overall height) monopole telecommunications structure located off 34th Avenue, Covert, Van Buren County, Michigan (42° 17' 40.3" N, 86° 14' 28.4" W). The proposed tower is anticipated to utilize FAA Style E (medium intensity, dual red/white strobes) lighting.
APC Towers, LLC invites comments from any interested party on the impact the proposed undertaking may have on any districts, sites, buildings, structures, or objects significant in American history, archaeology, engineering, or culture that are listed or determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Comments may be sent to Environmental Corporation of America, ATTN: Annamarie Howell, 1375 Union Hill Industrial Court, Suite A, Alpharetta, GA 30004 or via email to publicnotice@eca-usa.com. Ms. Howell can be reached at (770) 667-2040 x 108 during normal business hours. Comments must be received within 30 days of the date of this notice.
Any interested party may request further environmental review of the proposed action under the FCC's National Environmental Policy Act rules, 47 CFR §1.1307, by notifying the FCC of the specific reasons that the action may have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment. This request must only raise environmental concerns and can be filed online using the FCC pleadings system at https://wireless2.fcc.gov/UlsEntry/pleadings/pleadingsType.jsp or mailed to FCC Requests for Environmental Review, Attn: Ramon Williams, 45 L Street, Washington, DC 20554 within 30 days of the date of the National Notice as referenced within the Antenna Structure Registration (ASR) application. Mailed pleadings must include a request to waive the electronic filing requirement along with an explanation of why an electronic filing cannot be made. Refer to File No. A1382983 when submitting the request and to view the specific information about the proposed action. 26-000874/DMG

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**County: Van Buren; Mtgr: LAWRENCE ZEPPIERO; Atty: ANDREW BARNES - ANDREW BARNES; 1st Pub: 5/7/2026; Atty File #: (N/A); Insurer: (unknown)**
**NOTICE TO CREDITORS TO ALL CREDITORS: The Decedent, LAWRENCE ZEPPIERO,** whose last known address was 76641 11th Ave., South Haven, MI 49090, died April 05, 2026. There is no Personal Representative of the Decedent's Estate to whom letters of administration have been issued. Creditors of the Decedent are notified that all claims against the Decedent's estate will be forever barred unless presented to Donna Zeppiero, Trustee of The Lawrence Zeppiero and Donna Zeppiero Revocable Trust Dated March 15, 2024, within four months after the date of this publication. Notice is further given that the Trust will thereafter be assigned and distributed to the persons entitled to it. Dated: April 23, 2026 Donna Zeppiero, Trustee of The Lawrence Zeppiero and Donna Zeppiero Revocable Trust Dated March 15, 2024 Dated April 23, 2026 76641 11th Ave. South Haven, MI 49090 Attorney for Trustee: Andrew W. Barnes (P70571) Butzel Long, P.C. 317 Center Street South Haven, MI 49090 (269) 287-2010

**(05-07)**

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## LAWTON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

**INVITATION TO BID FOR LAWTON COMMUNITY SCHOOL PARKING LOT SEALING, CRACK FILLING, ASPHALT REPAIRS AND STRIPING ON OUR HIGH SCHOOL AND MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMPUS**

The Board of Education, Lawton Community Schools, is requesting bids for parking lot sealing, crack filling, asphalt repairs and striping on our High School and Middle School Campus.

**Bidding documents are available on our website at www.lawtoncs.org**

Bids are due in the Office of the Superintendent, 101 Primary Way, Lawton, MI 49065 on May 11, 2026, by 2:00 P.M.

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## LAWTON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
## NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING
## ON THE AMENDMENT OF THE 2025-2026 BUDGET AND THE PROPOSED 2026-27 BUDGET

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on May 18, 2026, at seven o'clock p.m. at Lawton High School, in Lawton, Michigan, the Board of Education of Lawton Community Schools will hold a public meeting to consider the District's proposed amendment of the 2025-26 budget and the proposed 2026-27 budget.

The Board may not adopt its proposed 2026-27 budget until after a public hearing. A copy of the proposed 2026-2027 budget, including the proposed property tax millage rate, is available for public inspection during normal business hours at 101 Primary Way, Lawton, Michigan.

**The property tax millage rate proposed to be levied to support the proposed budget will be a subject of this hearing.**

This notice is given by order of the Board of Education.

Larissa Hunt Secretary

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## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
## ALMENA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION 2026 ALMENA TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

The Almena Township Planning Commission will hold a public hearing regarding the 2026 Almena Township Master Plan. This long-range plan will guide growth, preservation, investment, and future land use decisions in Almena Township. The public is invited to learn about the plan and comment on the matter.

- Location: Almena Township Hall, 27625 County Road 375, Paw Paw, MI, 49079
- Date: June 3, 2026
- Time: Presentation and official public hearing at 6:30 pm.
- Hearing and project information: call 269-668-6910 or email david@horizon-planning.com

The draft plan is available at the Township office and can also be accessed here: https://www.almenatownship.gov/masterplan.php

Those unable to attend the public hearing are invited to submit written comments to the attention of the Planning Commission Chair at the Township Hall address listed above by 4:00 PM on the meeting date. If any individual has a physical disability that may limit their participation in the hearing, please notify the Township at least five (5) days prior to the hearing so that reasonable accommodations may be made.

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## VILLAGE OF MATTAWAN
## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Village of Mattawan Council will hold a Public Hearing to consider adopting a budget and tax levy for the 2026-2027 Fiscal Year.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a public hearing scheduled May 11, 2026 will be held before the Village Council at 7:00 PM in the Village meeting room, at which all interested persons will be given an opportunity to be heard.

**The proposed budget will take effect July 1, 2026 and end June 30, 2027. The proposed tax levy is 4.2646 mills plus 6.0 mills for police special assessment. The Council may consider a different levy amount including a levy in excess of 4.2646 mills plus 6.0 mills for the police special assessment.**

Budget Summary:

| | Revenue | Expenses |
|---|---|---|
| General Fund | $ 951,470 | $ 951,470 |
| Major Street Fund | $ 2,120,523 | $ 2,120,523 |
| Local Street Fund | $ 403,996 | $ 403,996 |
| Police Operating Fund | $ 856,800 | $ 856,800 |
| DDA Fund | $ 406,000 | $ 406,000 |
| Building Inspection Fund | $ 77,525 | $ 77,525 |
| Police Cont. Education Fund | $ 16,516 | $ 16,516 |
| Justice Training Fund | $ 3,756 | $ 3,756 |
| Metro Act Fund | $ 113,499 | $ 113,499 |
| Sewer Fund | $ 1,370,200 | $ 1,370,200 |
| Water Fund | $ 937,805 | $ 937,805 |
| Motor Pool DPW | $ 316,550 | $ 316,550 |
| MPD Capital Project Fund | $ 90,000 | $ 90,000 |
| Total | $ 7,664,640 | $ 7,664,640 |

This meeting will be held at the address below. Please send all written comments to:

Village of Mattawan
24221 Front Avenue
Mattawan, MI 49071
offices@mattawanmi.com

(269) 668-2128

Jolie Storm-Artis
Village Clerk

A copy of the complete proposed budget can be reviewed at the Village offices, Monday - Friday 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

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## VILLAGE OF MATTAWAN
## PLANNING COMMISSION
## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the Village of Mattawan Planning Commission will consider a **Special Land Use Request** received from Tim Spiech, **to allow for the construction of an indoor recreation facility at 56409 and 56509 Village Center Circle, Mattawan property ID # 80-46-701-028-00 and 80-46-701-027-00** in the Village of Mattawan.

1170-A28 13-3-13 1506-779 1665-756 1671-470 1737-151 1761-735 *** UNIT 28 THE SHOPS AT MCGILLEN'S CROSSING CONDOMINIUM TOGETHER WITH RIGHTS IN THE COMMON ELEMENTS AS DESCRIBED IN THE MASTER DEED RECORDED IN LIBER 1508, PAGE 884 AND ANY AMENDMENTS TO SAME. *** SPLIT ON 21 OCTOBER 2008 FROM 80-46-700-080-00 FOR 2009.

1170-A27 13-3-13 1506-779 1665-756 1671-470 1737-151 1761-735 *** UNIT 27 THE SHOPS AT MCGILLEN'S CROSSING CONDOMINIUM TOGETHER WITH RIGHTS IN THE COMMON ELEMENTS AS DESCRIBED IN THE MASTER DEED RECORDED IN LIBER 1508, PAGE 884 AND ANY AMENDMENTS TO SAME. *** SPLIT ON 21 OCTOBER 2008 FROM 80-46-700-080-00 FOR 2009.

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE** that the request will be considered by the Planning Commission at their meeting to be held on **May 20, 2026 @ 7:00 PM** for the purpose of receiving public comment regarding the proposed special land use. All interested persons will be given an opportunity to be heard.

This facility is designed to provide space for youth and adult athletic activities focused on basketball training, leagues, and tournaments. Operated as managed environment offering scheduled practices, games, and skill development. Also, opportunities for volleyball and pickleball are planned. More details of this project will be discussed at the hearing. We encourage the public to attend to express their opinions and learn about this project.

The meeting will be held in the Village Office meeting room at the address below. Please send all written comments to:

Village of Mattawan
24221 Front Avenue
Mattawan, MI 49071
(269) 668-2128
offices@mattawanmi.com

Jolie Storm-Artis
Village Clerk
April 22, 2026

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**• AUCTION •**

**ALL SECURE SELF STORAGE** will hold sale of abandoned property at a public sale pursuant in 540.521-570.527: Public Auction: 5/19/2026 at or after 9:30a.m. EST: 37404 W Red Arrow Highway Paw Paw: Stacy Adams, 311.

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**LAWTON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

**INVITATION TO BID FOR LAWTON COMMUNITY SCHOOL HVAC JACE SYSTEM UPGRADES AND REPLACEMENTS**

The Board of Education, Lawton Community Schools, is requesting bids for HVAC JACE system upgrades and replacements.

**Bidding documents are available on our website at www.lawtoncs.org**

Bids are due in the Office of the Superintendent, 101 Primary Way, Lawton, MI 49065 on May 12, 2026, by 2:00 P.M.

**TOWNSHIP OF WAVERLY**
**COUNTY OF VAN BUREN, STATE OF MICHIGAN**

**ORDINANCE ADDRESSING FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT PROVISIONS OF THE STATE CONSTRUCTION CODE**

**Ordinance number 2026-01**

An amendment to affirm an enforcing agency to discharge the responsibility of the Township of Waverly, located in Van Buren County, and to designate regulated flood hazard areas under the provisions of the State Construction Code Act, Act No. 230 of the Public Acts of 1972, as amended.

The Township of Waverly ordains:

**Section 1. AGENCY DESIGNATED.** Pursuant to the provisions of the state construction code, in accordance with Section 8b(6) of Act 230, of the Public Acts of 1972, as amended, the Building Official of the Township of Waverly, Van Buren County, is hereby designated as the enforcing agency to discharge the responsibility of the Township of Waverly under Act 230, of the Public Acts of 1972, as amended, State of Michigan. The Township of Waverly assumes responsibility for the administration and enforcement of said Act through out the corporate limits of the community adopting this ordinance.

**Section 2. CODE APPENDIX ENFORCED.** Pursuant to the provisions of the state construction code, in accordance with Section 8b(6) of Act 230, of the Public Acts of 1972, as amended, Appendix G of the Michigan Building Code shall be enforced by the enforcing agency within the jurisdiction of the community adopting this ordinance.

**Section 3. DESIGNATION OF REGULATED FLOOD PRONE HAZARD AREAS.** The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Study (FIS) Entitled "Van Buren County, Michigan (All Jurisdictions) and dated June 10, 2026, and the Flood Insurance Rate Map(s) (FIRMS) contained on index panel number(s) 26159CIND1C effective June 10, 2026, are adopted by reference for the purposes of administration of the Michigan Construction Code, and declared to be a part of Section 1612.3 of the Michigan Building Code, and to provide the content of the "Flood Hazards" section of Table R301.2(1) of the Michigan Residential Code.

**Section 4. MOST RESTRICTIVE STANDARDS.** If another ordinance contains standards inconsistent with the provisions of this ordinance, the most restrictive standards shall apply.

**Section 5. PUBLICATION.**

This ordinance duly adopted on Feb, 5, 2026, at a regular meeting of the Waverly Township Board and will become effective June 10, 2026.

Motion by Brown, second by Fleetwood

Starr Houston, Clerk Waverly Township

Attested on Feb. 5 2026.

Tony Millek, Supervisor, Waverly Township

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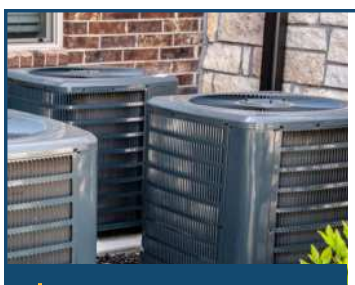
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